

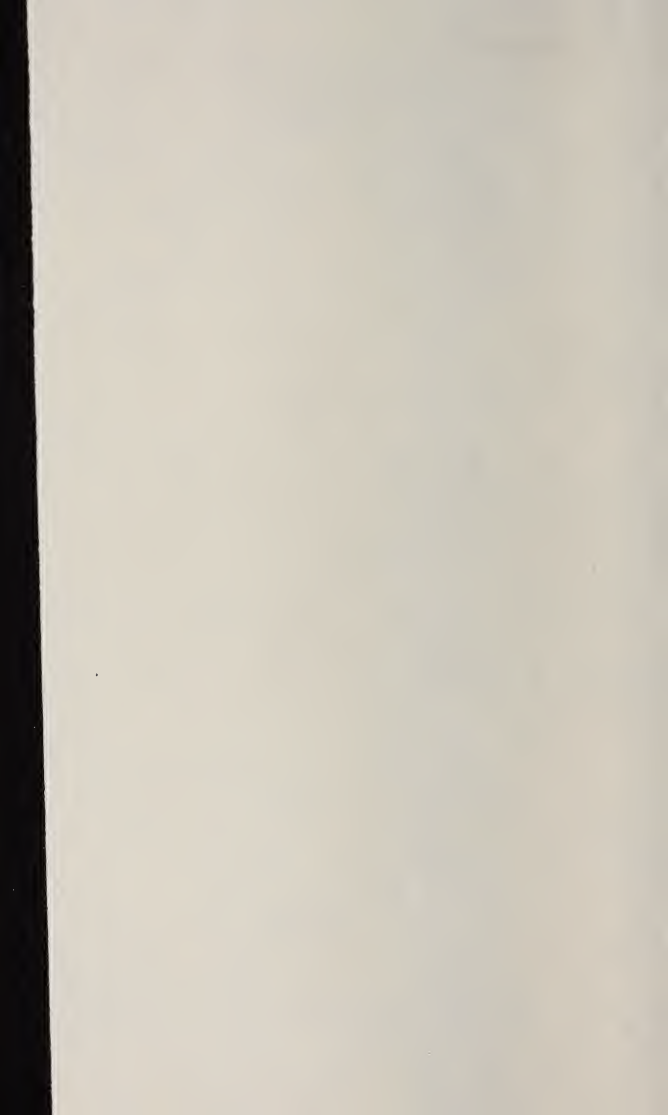
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Ople, Mrs. Amelia (Abderson)

# ILLUSTRATIONS OF LYING,

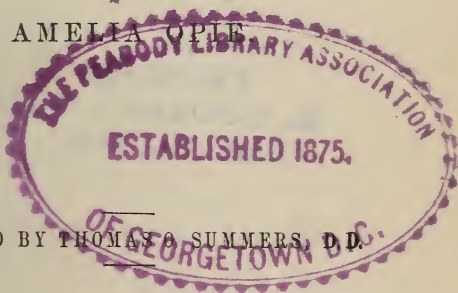
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All its Branches.

BY

AMELIA OPLE



REVISED BY THOMAS O. SUMMERS, D.D.

NASHVILLE, TENN.:  
SOUTHERN METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE.  
1882.

BJ 1421  
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## Editorial Note.

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MRS. OPIE'S work on Lying has long since taken its rank among English classics, and therefore needs no recommendation from us. It has gained an immense popularity, which is the more remarkable as it traverses the views of some of our great moralists—Archdeacon Paley being one of them. We have edited it with care, inserting an occasional note, the reasons for which will be obvious to the reader. We counsel all parents to put this admirable volume into the hands of their children.

NASHVILLE, TENN., Dec. 31, 1856.

TO

Dr. Alderson, of Norwich,

---

To thee, my beloved Father, I dedicated my first, and to thee I also dedicate my present work ; with the pleasing conviction that thou art disposed to form a favorable judgment of any production, however humble, which has a tendency to promote the moral and religious welfare of mankind.

AMELIA OPIE.



## Preface.

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I AM aware that a preface must be short, if its author aspire to have it read. I shall therefore content myself with making a very few preliminary observations, which I wish to be considered as apologies.

My first apology is, for having throughout my book made use of the words lying and lies, instead of some gentler term, or some easy paraphrase, by which I might have avoided the risk of offending the delicacy of any of my readers.

Our great satirist speaks of a Dean who was a favorite at the church where he officiated, because

“He never mentioned hell to ears polite,”—

and I fear that to “ears polite,” my coarseness, in uniformly calling lying and lie by their real names, may sometimes be offensive.

But, when writing a book against lying, I was obliged to express my meaning in the manner most consonant to the *strict truth*; nor could I employ any words with such propriety as those hallowed and sanctioned for use, on such an occasion, by the practice of inspired and holy men of old.

Moreover, I believe that those who accustom themselves to call lying and lie by a softening appellation, are in danger of weakening their aversion to the fault itself.

My second apology is, for presuming to come forward, with such apparent boldness, as a didactic writer, and a teacher of truths, which I ought to believe that every one knows already, and better than I do.

But I beg permission to deprecate the charge of presumption and self-conceit, by declaring that I pretend not to lay before my readers any new knowledge; my only aim is to bring to their recollection knowledge which they already possess, but do not constantly recall and act upon.

I am to them, and to my subject, what the picture-cleaner is to the picture—the restorer to observation of what is valuable, and not the artist who created it.

In the next place, I wish to remind them that a weak hand is as able as a powerful one to hold a mirror, in which we may see any defects in our dress or person.

In the last place, I venture to assert that there is not in my whole book a more commonplace truth than that kings are but men, and that monarchs, as well as their subjects, must surely die.

Notwithstanding, Philip of Macedon was so conscious of his liability to forget this awful truth, that he employed a monitor to follow him every day, repeating in his ear, “Remember thou art but a man.” And he who gave this salutary admonition neither *possessed* superiority of wisdom, nor *pretended* to possess it.

All, therefore, that I require of my readers is to do me justice to believe that, in the following work, my pretensions have been as humble, and as confined, as those of the REMEMBRANCER of PHILIP OF MACEDON.

AMELIA OPIE.

# Illustrations of Lying,

## IN ALL ITS BRANCHES.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

WHAT constitutes lying?

I answer, the *intention to deceive*.

If this be a correct definition, there must be *passive* as well as *active* lying; and those who withhold the truth, or do not tell the whole truth, with an intention to deceive, are guilty of lying, as well as those who tell a direct or positive falsehood.

Lies are many, and various in their nature and in their tendency, and may be arranged under their different names, thus:

Lies of Vanity.

Lies of Flattery.

Lies of Convenience.

Lies of Interest.

Lies of Fear.

Lies of first-rate Malignity.

Lies of second-rate Malignity.

Lies, falsely called Lies of Benevolence.

Lies of real Benevolence.

Lies of mere Wantonness, proceeding from a depraved love of lying, or contempt for truth.

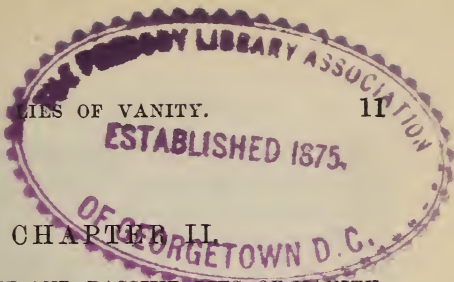
There are others probably; but I believe that this list contains all those which are of the most importance; unless, indeed, we may add to it—

Practical Lies; that is, Lies acted, not spoken.

I shall give an anecdote, or tale, in order to illustrate each sort of lie in its turn, or nearly so, lies for the sake of lying *excepted*; for I should find it very difficult so to illustrate this the most despicable species of falsehood.







LIES OF VANITY.

11

ESTABLISHED 1875.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE ACTIVE AND PASSIVE LIES OF VANITY.

I SHALL begin my observations by defining what I mean by the Lie of Vanity, both in its active and passive nature ; these lies being undoubtedly the most common, because vanity is one of the most powerful springs of human action, and is usually the besetting sin of every one. Suppose that, in order to give myself consequence, I were to assert that I was actually acquainted with certain great and distinguished personages whom I had merely met in fashionable society. Suppose, also, I were to say that I was at such a place, and such an assembly, on such a night, without adding that I was there not as an invited guest, but only because a benefit concert was held at these places, for which I had tickets. These would both be lies of vanity ; but the one would be an active, the other a passive lie.

In the first I should assert a direct falsehood, in the other I should withhold part of the truth ; but both would be lies, because in both my intention was to deceive.\*

---

\* This passive lie is a very frequent one in certain circles in London ; as many ladies and gentlemen there purchase tickets for benefit concerts held at great houses, in order that they may be able to say, "I was at Lady Such-a-one's on such a night."

But though we are frequently tempted to be guilty of the active lies of vanity, our temptations to its passive lies are more frequent still; nor can the sincere lovers of truth be too much on their guard against this constantly recurring danger. The following instances will explain what I mean by this observation.

If I assert that my motive for a particular action was virtuous, when I know that it was worldly and selfish, I am guilty of an *active* or *direct* lie. But I am equally guilty of falsehood, if, while I hear my actions or forbearances praised, and imputed to decidedly worthy motives, when I am conscious that they sprang from unworthy or unimportant ones, I listen with silent complacency, and do not positively disclaim my right to commendation; only, in the one case I lie *directly*, in the other *indirectly*: the lie is *active* in the one, and *passive* in the other. And are we not all of us conscious of having sometimes accepted incense to our vanity, which we knew that we did not deserve?

Men have been known to boast of attention, and even of avowals of serious love from women, and women from men, which, in point of fact, they never received, and therein have been guilty of positive falsehood; but they who, without any contradiction on their own part, allow their friends and flatterers to insinuate that they have been, or are, objects of love and admiration to those who never professed either, are as much guilty of deception as the utterers of the above-mentioned assertion. Still, it is certain that many, who would

shrink with moral disgust from committing the latter species of falsehood, are apt to remain silent, when their vanity is gratified, without any overt act of deceit on their part, and are contented to let the flattering belief remain uncontradicted. Yet the turpitude is, in my opinion, at least, nearly equal, if my definition of lying be correct—namely, *the intention to deceive*.

This disingenuous passiveness, this deceitful silence, belongs to that extensive and common species of falsehood, *withholding the truth*.

But this *tolerated* sin, denominated *white lying*, is a sin which I believe that some persons commit, not only without being conscious that it is a sin, but, frequently, with a belief that, to do it readily, and without confusion, is often a merit, and always a proof of *ability*. Still more frequently, they do it unconsciously, perhaps, from the force of habit; and, like Monsieur Jourdain, “the Bourgeois gentle-homme,” who found out that he had talked prose all his life without knowing it, these persons utter lie upon lie, without knowing that what they utter deserves to be considered as falsehood.

I am myself convinced that a passive lie is equally as irreconcilable to moral principles as an active one; but I am well aware that most persons are of a different opinion. Yet I would say to those who thus differ from me, if you allow yourselves to violate truth—that is, to *deceive*, for any purpose whatever—who can say where this sort of self-indulgence will submit to be bounded? Can you be sure that you will not, when strongly

tempted, utter what is equally false, in order to benefit yourself, at the expense of a fellow-creature?

All mortals are, at times, accessible to temptation; but when we are not exposed to it, we dwell with complacency on our means of resisting it, on our principles, and our tried and experienced self-denial; but as the life-boat, and the safety-gun, which succeeded in all that they were made to do while the sea was calm and the winds still, have been known to fail when the vessel was tossed on a tempestuous ocean; so those who may successfully oppose principle to temptation when the tempest of the passions is not awakened within their bosoms, may sometimes be overwhelmed by its power when it meets them in all its awful energy and unexpected violence.

But in every warfare against human corruption, habitual resistance to little temptations is, next to prayer, the most efficacious aid. He who is to be trained for public exhibitions of feats of strength, is made to carry small weights at first, which are daily increased in heaviness, till, at last, he is almost unconsciously able to bear, with ease, the greatest weight possible to be borne by man. In like manner, those who resist the daily temptation to tell what are apparently trivial and innocent lies, will be better able to withstand allurements to serious and important deviations from truth, and be more fortified in the hour of more severe temptation against every species of dereliction from integrity.

The active lies of vanity are so numerous, but,



at the same time, are so like each other, that it were useless, as well as endless, to attempt to enumerate them. I shall therefore mention one of them only, before I proceed to my tale on the *active lie of vanity*, and that is the most common of all, namely, the violation of truth which persons indulge in relative to their age; an error so generally committed, especially by the unmarried of both sexes, that few persons can expect to be believed when declaring their age at an advanced period of life. So common, and therefore so little disreputable, is this species of lie considered to be, that a sensible friend of mine said to me the other day, when I asked him the age of the lady whom he was going to marry, "She tells me she is five-and-twenty: I therefore *conclude* that she is five-and-thirty." This was undoubtedly spoken in joke; still it was an evidence of the toleration generally granted on this point.

But though it is *possible* that my friend believed the lady to be a year or two older than she owned herself to be, and thought a deviation from truth on this subject was of no consequence, I am very sure that he would not have ventured to marry a woman whom he suspected of lying on any other occasion. This however is a lie which does not expose the utterer to severe animadversion, and for this reason probably, that all mankind are so averse to be thought old, that the wish to be considered younger than the truth warrants meets with complacent sympathy and indulgence, even when years are notoriously annihilated at the impulse of vanity.

I give the following story in illustration of the *active lie of vanity*.

---

### THE STAGE-COACH.

AMONGST those whom great successes in trade had raised to considerable opulence in their native city, was a family by the name of Burford; and the eldest brother, when he was the only surviving partner of that name in the firm, was not only able to indulge himself in the luxuries of a carriage, country-house, garden, hot-houses, and all the privileges which wealth bestows, but could also lay by money enough to provide amply for his children.

His only daughter had been adopted, when very young, by her paternal grandmother, whose fortune was employed in her son's trade, and who could well afford to take on herself all the expenses of Annabel's education. But it was with painful reluctance that Annabel's excellent mother consented to resign her child to another's care; nor could she be prevailed upon to do so, till Burford, who believed that his widowed parent would sink under the loss of her husband unless Annabel was permitted to reside with her, commanded her to yield her maternal rights in pity to this beloved sufferer. She could therefore presume to refuse no longer; but she yielded with a mental conflict only too prophetic of the mischief to which she exposed her child's mind

and character, by this enforced surrender of a mother's duties.

The grandmother was a thoughtless woman of this world: the mother, a pious, reflecting being, continually preparing herself for the world to come. With the latter, Annabel would have acquired principles: with the former, she could only learn accomplishments; and that weakly judging person encouraged her in habits of mind and character which would have filled both her father and mother with pain and apprehension.

Vanity was her ruling passion; and this her grandmother fostered by every means in her power. She gave her elegant dresses, and had her taught showy accomplishments. She delighted to hear her speak of herself, and boast of the compliments paid her on her beauty and her talents. She was even weak enough to admire the skilful falsehood with which she embellished every thing which she narrated; but this vicious propensity the old lady considered only as a proof of a lively fancy; and she congratulated herself on the consciousness how much more agreeable her fluent and inventive Annabel was, than the *matter-of-fact* girls with whom she associated. But while Annabel and her grandmother were on a visit at Burford's country-house, and while the parents were beholding with sorrow the conceit and flippancy of their only daughter, they were plunged at once into comparative poverty, by the ruin of some of Burford's correspondents abroad, and by the fraudulent conduct of a friend in whom he had trusted. In a few short weeks, therefore, the

ruined grandmother and her adopted child, together with the parents and their boys, were forced to seek an asylum in the heart of Wales, and live on the slender marriage settlement of Burford's amiable wife. For her every one felt, as it was thought that she had always discouraged that expensive style of living which had exposed her husband to envy, and its concomitant detractions, among those whose increase in wealth had not kept pace with his own. He had also carried his ambition so far, that he had even aspired to represent his native city in parliament; and, as he was a violent politician, some of the opposite party not only rejoiced in his downfall, but were ready to believe and to propagate that he had made a fraudulent bankruptcy in concert with his friend who had absconded, and that he had secured or conveyed away from his creditors money to a considerable amount. But the tale of calumny, which has no foundation in truth, cannot long retain its power to injure; and, in process of time, the feelings of the creditors in general were so completely changed toward Burford, that some of them who had been most decided against signing his certificate, were at length brought to confess that it was a matter for *reconsideration*. Therefore, when a distinguished friend of his father's, who had been strongly prejudiced against him at first, repented of his unjust credulity, and, in order to make him amends, offered him a share in his own business, all the creditors, except two of the principal ones, became willing to sign the certificate. Perhaps

there is nothing so difficult to remove from some minds as suspicions of a derogatory nature ; and the creditors in question were envious, worldly men, who piqued themselves on their shrewdness, could not brook the idea of being overreached, and were, perhaps, not sorry that he whose prosperity had excited their jealousy, should now be humbled before them as a dependent and a suppliant. However, even they began to be tired at length of holding out against the opinion of so many ; and Burford had the comfort of being informed, after he had been some months in Wales, that matters were in train to enable him to get into business again, with restored credit and renewed prospects.

"Then, who knows, Anna," said he to his wife, "but that in a few years I shall be able, by industry and economy, to pay all that I owe, both principal and interest ? for till I have done so, I shall not be really happy ; and then poverty will be robbed of its sting." "Not only so," she replied : "we could never have given our children a better inheritance than this proof of their father's strict integrity ; and surely, my dear husband, a blessing will attend thy labors and intentions." "I humbly trust that it will." "Yes," she continued, "our change of fortune has humbled our pride of heart, and the cry of our contrition and humility has not ascended in vain." "*Our* pride of heart !" replied Burford, tenderly embracing her : "it was *I*, I alone, who deserved chastisement, and I cannot bear to hear thee blame thyself ; but it is like thee, Anna,—thou

art ever kind, ever generous ; however, as I like to be obliged to thee, I am contented that thou shouldst talk of *our* pride and *our* chastisement." While these hopes were uppermost in the minds of this amiable couple, and were cheering the weak mind of Burford's mother, which, as it had been foolishly elated by prosperity, was now as improperly depressed by adversity, Annabel had been passing several months at the house of a schoolfellow some miles from her father's dwelling. The vain girl had felt the deepest mortification at this blight to her worldly prospects, and bitterly lamented being no longer able to talk of her grandmother's villa and carriages, and her father's hot-houses and grounds ; nor could she help repining at the loss of those indulgences to which she had been accustomed. She was therefore delighted to leave home on a visit, and very sorry when unexpected circumstances in her friend's family obliged her to return sooner than she intended. She was compelled also to return by herself in a public coach,—a great mortification to her still existing pride ; but she had now no pretensions to travel otherwise, and found it necessary to submit to circumstances. In the coach were one young man and two elderly ones ; and her companions seemed so willing to pay her attention, and make her journey pleasant to her, that Annabel, who always believed herself an object of admiration, was soon convinced that she had made a conquest of the youth, and that the others thought her a very sweet creature. She therefore gave way to all her loquacious vivacity :



she hummed tunes in order to show that she could sing: she took out her pencil and sketched wherever they stopped to change horses; and talked of her own *boudoir*, her own maid, and all the past glories of her state, as if they still existed. In short, she tried to impress her companions with a high idea of her consequence, and as if unusual and unexpected circumstances had led her to travel *incog.*, while she put in force all her attractions against their poor condemned hearts. What an odious thing is a coquette of sixteen! and such was Annabel Burford. Certain it is, that she became an object of great attention to the gentlemen with her, but of admiration probably to the young man alone, who, in her youthful beauty, might possibly overlook her obvious defects. During the journey, one of the elderly gentlemen opened a basket which stood near him, containing some fine hot-house grapes and flowers. "There, young lady," said he to her, "did you ever see such fruit as this before?" "O dear, yes, in my papa's grapery." "Indeed! but did you ever see such fine flowers?" "O dear, yes, in papa's succession-houses. There is nothing, I assure you, of that sort," she added, drawing up her head with a look of ineffable conceit, "that I am not accustomed to"—condescending, however, at the same time, to eat some of the grapes and accept some of the flowers.

It was natural that her companions should now be very desirous of finding out what princess in disguise was deigning to travel in a manner so unworthy of her; and when they stopped within



a few miles of her home, one of the gentlemen, having discovered that she was known to a passenger on the top of the coach, who was about to leave it, got out and privately asked him who she was. "Burford! Burford!" cried he, when he heard the answer; "what! the daughter of Burford the bankrupt?" "Yes, the same." With a frowning brow he reëntered the coach, and, when seated, whispered to the old gentleman next him; and both of them, having exchanged glances of sarcastic and indignant meaning, looked at Annabel with great significance. Nor was it long before she observed a marked change in their manner toward her. They answered her with abruptness, and even with reluctance; till, at length, the one who had interrogated her acquaintance on the coach said, in a sarcastic tone, "I conclude that you were speaking just now, young lady, of the fine things which were *once* yours. You have no graperies and succession-houses *now*, I take it." "Dear me! why not, sir?" replied the conscious girl, in a trembling voice. "Why not? Why, excuse my freedom, but are you not the daughter of Mr. Burford the bankrupt?" Never was child more tempted to deny her parentage than Annabel was; but, though with great reluctance, she faltered out, "Yes; and to be sure my father was once unfortunate; but"—here she looked at her young and opposite neighbor; and seeing that his look of admiring respect was exchanged for one of ill-suppressed laughter, she felt irresistibly urged to add, "But we are very well off now, I assure you; and our present residence is so

pretty ! Such a sweet garden ! and such a charming hot-house !”

“Indeed !” returned the old man with a significant nod to his friend : “well, then, let your papa take care he does not make his house too hot to hold him, and that *another* house be not added to his list of residences.” Here he laughed heartily at his own wit, and was echoed by his companion. “But, pray, how long has he been thus again favored by fortune ?” “O dear ! I cannot say ; but for some time ; and I assure you our style of living is—very complete.” “I do not doubt it ; for children and fools speak truth, says the proverb ; and sometimes,” added he in a low voice, “the child and the fool are the same person.” “So, so,” he muttered aside to the other traveller : “gardens ! hot-house ! carriage ! swindling, specious rascal !” But Annabel heard only the first part of the sentence ; and being quite satisfied that she had recovered all her consequence in the eyes of her young beau by two or three *white lies*, as she termed them, (flights of fancy in which she was apt to indulge,) she resumed her attack on his heart, and continued to converse, in her most seducing manner, till the coach stopped, according to her desire, at a cottage by the road-side, where, as she said, her father’s groom was to meet her, and take her portmanteau. The truth was, she did not choose to be set down at her own humble home, which was at the farther end of the village, because it would not only tell the tale of her fallen fortunes, but would prove the falsehood of what

she had been asserting. When the coach stopped, she exclaimed, with well-acted surprise, "Dear me! how strange that the servant is not waiting for me! But it does not signify: I can stop here till he comes." She then left the coach, scarcely greeted by her elderly companions, but followed, as she fancied, by looks of love from the youth, who handed her out, and expressed his great regret at parting with her.

The parents, meanwhile, were eagerly expecting her return; for though the obvious defects in her character gave them excessive pain, and they were resolved to leave no measures untried in order to eradicate them, they had missed her amusing vivacity; and even their low and confined dwelling was rendered cheerful when, with her sweet and brilliant tones, she went carolling about the house. Besides, she was coming, for the first time, alone and unexpected; and, as the coach was later than usual, the anxious tenderness of the parental heart was worked up to a high pitch of feeling, and they were even beginning to share the fantastic fears of the impatient grandmother, when they saw the coach stop at a distant turn of the road, and soon after beheld Annabel coming toward them; who was fondly clasped to those affectionate bosoms, for which her unprincipled falsehoods, born of the most contemptible vanity, had prepared fresh trials and fresh injuries; for her elderly companions were her father's principal and relentless creditors, who had been down to Wynstaye on business, and were returning thence to London; intending, when they arrived there, to

assure Sir James Alberry—that friend of Burford's father, who resided in London, and wished to take him into partnership—that they were no longer averse to sign his certificate; being at length convinced that he was a calumniated man. But now all their suspicions were renewed and confirmed: since it was easier for them to believe that Burford was still the villain which they always thought him, than that so young a girl should have told so many falsehoods at the mere impulse of vanity. They therefore became more inveterate against her poor father than ever; and, though their first visit to the metropolis was to the gentleman in question, it was now impelled by a wish to injure, not to serve him. How differently would they have felt, had the vain and false Annabel allowed the coach to set her down at her father's lowly door; and had they beheld the interior arrangement of his house and family: had they seen neatness and order giving attraction to cheap and ordinary furniture: had they beheld the simple meal spread out to welcome the wanderer home, and the Bible and Prayer-book ready for the evening service, which was deferred till it could be shared again with her whose return would add fervor to the devotion of that worshipping family, and would call forth additional expressions of thanksgiving!

The dwelling of Burford was that of a man improved by trials past: of one who looked forward with thankfulness and hope to the renewed possession of a competence, in the belief that he should now be able to make a wiser and holier use

of it than he had done before. His wife had needed no such lesson; though, in the humility of her heart, she thought otherwise; and she had helped her husband to impress on the yielding minds of her boys, who (happier than their sister) had never left her, that a season of worldly humiliation is more safe and blessed than one of worldly prosperity; while their Welch cottage and wild mountain garden had been converted, by her resources and her example, into a scene of such rural industry and innocent amusement, that they could no longer regret the splendid house and grounds which they had been obliged to resign. The grandmother, indeed, had never ceased to mourn and to murmur; and, to her, the hope of seeing a return of brighter days, by means of a new partnership, was beyond measure delightful. But she was doomed to be disappointed, through those errors in the child of her adoption which she had at least encouraged, if she had not occasioned.

It was with even clamorous delight that Annabel, after this absence of a few months, was welcomed by her brothers: the parents' welcome was of a quieter, deeper nature; while the grandmother's first solicitude was to ascertain how she looked; and having convinced herself that she was returned handsomer than ever, her joy was as loud as that of the boys. "Do come hither, Bell," said one of her brothers: "we have so much to show you! The old cat has such nice kittens!" "Yes; and my rabbits have all young ones!" cried another. "And I and mamma,"



cried the third boy, "have put large stones into the bed of the mountain rill; so now it makes such a nice noise as it flows over them! Do come, Bell: do, pray, come with us!" But the evening duties were first to be performed; and performed they were, with more than usual solemnity; but after them Annabel had to eat her supper; and she was so engrossed in relating her adventures in the coach, and with describing the attentions of her companions, that her poor brothers were not attended to. In vain did her mother say, "Do, Annabel, go with your brothers!" and add, "Go now; for it is near their bed-time!" She was too fond of hearing herself talk, and of her grandmother's flatteries, to be willing to leave the room; and though her mother was disappointed at her selfishness, she could not bear to chide her on the first night of her return.

When Annabel was alone with her grandmother, she ventured to communicate to her what a fearful consciousness of not having done right had led her to conceal from her parents; and after relating all that had passed relative to the fruit and flowers, she repeated the cruel question of the old man, "Are you not the daughter of Mr. Burford, the bankrupt?" and owned what her reply was: on which her grandmother exclaimed, with great emotion, "Unthinking girl! you know not what injury you may have done your father!" She then asked for a particular description of the persons of the old men, saying, "Well, well, it cannot be helped now—I may be mistaken; but be sure not to tell your mother what you have told me."

For some days after Annabel's return, all went on well; and their domestic felicity would have been so complete, that Burford and his wife would have much disliked any idea of change, had their income been sufficient to give their boys good education; but as it was only just sufficient for their maintenance, they looked forward with anxious expectation to the arrival of a summons to London, and to their expected residence there. Still the idea of leaving their present abode was really painful to all, save Annabel and her grandmother. They thought the rest of the family devoid of proper spirit, and declared that living in Wales was not living at all.

But a stop was now put to eager anticipations on the one hand, or of tender regrets on the other; for, while Burford was expecting daily to receive remittances from Sir James Alberby, to enable him to transport himself and his family to the metropolis, that gentleman wrote to him as follows:

“SIR: All connection between us is for ever at an end; and I have given the share in my business which was intended for you, to the *worthy* man who has so long solicited it. I thought that I had done you injustice, sir: I wished therefore to make you amends. But I find you are what you are represented to be—a fraudulent bankrupt; and your certificate *now will never be signed*. Should you wonder what has occasioned this change in my feelings and proceedings, I am at liberty to inform you that your daughter travelled in a stage-coach, a few days ago, with your two

principal creditors; and I am desired to add, *that children and fools speak truth.*

“JAMES ALBERRY.”

When Burford had finished reading this letter, it fell from his grasp, and, claspings his hands convulsively together, he exclaimed, “Ruined and disgraced for ever!” then rushed into his own chamber. His terrified wife followed him with the unread letter in her hand, looking the inquiries which she could not utter. “Read that,” he replied, “and see that Sir James Albertry deems me a villain!” She did read, and with a shaking frame; but it was not the false accusation of her husband, nor the loss of the expected partnership, that thus agitated her firm nerves, and firmer mind: it was the painful conviction that Annabel, by some means unknown to her, had been the cause of this mischief to her father—a conviction which considerably increased Burford’s agony, when she pointed out the passage in Sir James’s letter alluding to Annabel, who was immediately summoned, and desired to explain Sir James’s mysterious meaning. “Dear me, papa,” cried she, changing color, “I am sure, if I had thought,—I am sure I could not think,—nasty, ill-natured old man! I am sure I only said——” “But what *did* you say?” cried her agitated father. “I can explain all,” said his mother, who had entered uncalled for, and read the letter. She then repeated what Annabel had told, but softening it as much as she could; however, she told enough to show the agonizing parents that their child was



not only the cause of disappointment and disgrace to them, but a mean, vainglorious, and despicable liar! "The only amends which you can now make us," said Burford, "is to tell the whole truth, unhappy child! and then we must see what can be done; for my reputation must be cleared, even at the painful expense of exposing you." Nor was it long before the mortified Annabel, with a heart awakened to contrition by her mother's gentle reproofs, and the tender teachings of a mother's love, made an ample confession of all that had passed in the stage-coach; on hearing which, Burford instantly resolved to set off for London. But how was he to get thither? He had no money—as he had recently been obliged to pay some debts of his still thoughtless and extravagant mother—nor could he bear to borrow of his neighbor what he was afraid he might be for some time unable to return. "Cruel, unprincipled girl!" cried he, as he paced their little room in agony: "see to what misery thou hast reduced thy father! However, I must go to London immediately, though it be on foot." "Well, really, I don't see any very great harm in what the poor child did," cried his mother, distressed at seeing Annabel's tears. "It was very trying to her to be reproached with her father's bankruptcy and her fallen fortunes; and it was very natural for her to say what she did." "Natural!" exclaimed the indignant mother: "natural for my child to utter falsehood on falsehood, and at the instigation of a mean vanity! Natural for my child to shrink from the avowal of poverty, which

was unattended with disgrace! O! make us not more wretched than we were before, by trying to lessen Annabel's faults in her own eyes! Our only comfort is the hope that she is ashamed of herself." "But neither her shame nor penitence," cried Burford, "will give me the quickest means of repairing the effects of her error. However, as I cannot ride, I must walk to London;" while his wife, alarmed at observing the dew of weakness which stood upon his brow, and the faint flush which overspread his cheek, exclaimed, "But will not writing to Sir James be sufficient?" "No. My appearance will corroborate my assurances too well. The only writing necessary will be a detail from Annabel of all that passed in the coach, and a confession of her fault." "What! exact from your child such a disgraceful avowal, William!" cried the angry grandmother. "Yes; for it is a punishment due to her transgression; and she may think herself happy if its consequences end here." "Here's a fuss indeed, about a little harmless puffing and white lying!" "Harmless!" replied Burford, in a tone of indignation; while his wife exclaimed, in the agony of a wounded spirit, "O! mother, mother! do not make us deplore, more than we already do, that fatal hour when we consented to surrender our dearest duties at the call of compassion for your sorrows, and intrusted the care of our child's precious soul to your erroneous tenderness! But I trust that Annabel deeply feels her sinfulness, and that the effects of a mistaken education may have been counteracted in time."

The next day, having procured the necessary document from Annabel, Burford set off on his journey, intending to travel occasionally on the tops of coaches, being well aware that he was not in a state of health to walk the whole way.

In the meanwhile, Sir James Alberry, the London merchant, to whom poor Burford was then pursuing his long and difficult journey, was beginning to suspect that he had acted hastily, and, perhaps, unjustly. He had written his distressing letter in the moments of his first indignation, on hearing the statement of the two creditors; and he had moreover written it under their dictation; and as the person who had long wished to be admitted into partnership with him happened to call at the same time, and had taken advantage of Burford's supposed delinquency, he had, without further hesitation, granted his request. But as Sir James, though a *rash*, was a *kind-hearted* man, when his angry feelings had subsided, the rebound of them was in favor of the poor accused; and he reproached himself for having condemned and punished a supposed culprit, before he was even heard in his defence. Therefore, having invited Burford's accusers to return to dinner, he dismissed them as soon as he could, and went in search of his wife, wishing, but not expecting, his hasty proceeding to receive the approbation of her candid spirit and discriminating judgment. "What is all this?" cried Lady Alberry, when he had done speaking. "Is it possible that, on the evidence of these two men, who have shown themselves inveterate ene-

mies of the poor bankrupt, you have broken your promise to him, and pledged it to another?" "Yes; and my letter to Burford is gone. I wish I had shown it to you before it went; but surely Burford's child could not have told them falsehoods." "That depends on her education." "True, Jane; and she was brought up, you know, by that paragon, her mother, who cannot do wrong." "No: she was brought up by that weak woman, her grandmother, who is not likely, I fear, ever to do right. Had her pious mother educated her, I should have been sure that Annabel Burford could not have told a lie. However, I shall see, and interrogate the accusers. In the meanwhile, I must regret your excessive precipitancy."

As Lady Alberry was a woman who scrupulously performed all her religious and moral duties, she was, consequently, always observant of that holy command, "not to take up a reproach against her neighbor." She was, therefore, very unwilling to believe the truth of this charge against Burford; and thought that it was more likely an ill-educated girl should tell a falsehood, which had also, perhaps, been magnified by involuntary exaggeration, than that the husband of such a woman as Anna Burford should be the delinquent which his old creditors described him to be. For she had in former days been thrown into society with Burford's wife, and felt attracted toward her by the strongest of all sympathies, that of entire unity on those subjects most connected with our welfare here and hereafter: those sympathies which can convert strangers into friends,

and draw them together in the enduring ties of pure, Christian love. "No, no," said she to herself: "the beloved husband of such a woman cannot be a villain;" and she awaited, with benevolent impatience, the arrival of her expected guests.

They came, accompanied by Charles Danvers, Annabel's young fellow-traveller, who was nephew to one of them; and Lady Alberry lost no time in drawing from them an exact detail of all that had passed. "And this girl, you say, was a forward, conceited, set-up being, full of herself and her accomplishments: in short, the creature of vanity." "Yes," replied one of the old men, "it was quite a comedy to look at her and hear her!" "But what says my young friend?" "The same. She is very pretty; but a model of affectation, boasting, and vanity. Now she was hanging her head on one side—then looking languishingly with her eyes; and when my uncle, *coarsely*, as I thought, talked of her father as a bankrupt, her expression of angry mortification was so ludicrous, that I could scarcely help laughing. Nay, I do assure you," he continued, "that had we been left alone a few minutes, I should have been made the confidant of her love-affairs; for she sighed deeply once, and asked me, with an affected lisp, if I did not think it a dangerous thing to have a too susceptible heart?" As he said this, after the manner of Annabel, both of the old men exclaimed, "Admirable! that is she to the life! I think that I see her and hear her!" "But I dare say," said Lady Alberry gravely, "that you paid her compliments, and pretended to admire

her, notwithstanding." "I own it; for how could I refuse the incense which every look and gesture demanded?" "A principle of truth, young man, would have enabled you to do it. What a fine lesson it would be for poor flattered women; if we could know how meanly men think of us, even when they flatter us the most." "But, dear Lady Alberry, this girl seemed to me a mere child—a coquette of the nursery: still, had she been older, her evident vanity would have secured me against her beauty." "You are mistaken, Charles: this child is almost seventeen. But now, gentlemen, as *just men*, I appeal to you all, whether it is not more likely that this vainglorious girl told lies, than that her father, the husband of one of the best of women, should be guilty of the grossest dishonesty?" "I must confess, Jane, that you have convinced me," said Sir James; but the two creditors only frowned, and spoke not. "But consider," said this amiable advocate: "if the girl's habitation was so beautiful, was it not inconsistent with her boasting propensities that she should not choose to be set down at it? And if her father still had carriages and servants, would they not have been sent to meet her? And if he were really rich, would she have been allowed to travel alone in a stage-coach? Impossible; and I conjure you to suspend your severe judgment of an unfortunate man, till you have sent some one to see how he really lives."

"I am forced to return to Wynstaye to-morrow," growled out Charles's uncle; "therefore, suppose I go myself." "We had fixed to go into



Wales ourselves next week," replied Lady Alberry, "on a visit to a dear friend who lives not far from Wynstaye. Therefore, what say you, Sir James? Had we not better go with our friend? For if you have done poor Burford injustice, the sooner you make him reparation, and *in person*, the better." To this proposal Sir James gladly assented; and they set off for Wales the next day, accompanied by the uncle and the nephew.

As Lady Alberry was going to her chamber, on the second night of their journey, she was startled by the sound of deep groans, and a sort of delirious raving, from a half-open door. "Surely," said she to the landlady who was conducting her, "there is some one very ill in that room." "O dear! yes, my lady: a poor man who was picked up on the road yesterday. He had walked all the way from the heart of Wales, till he was so tired, he got on a coach; and he supposes that, from weakness, he fell off in the night; and not being missed, he lay till he was found and brought hither." "Has any medical man seen him?" "Not yet; for our surgeon lives a good way; and as he had his senses when he first came, we hoped he was not much hurt. He was able to tell us that he only wanted a garret, as he was very poor; and yet, my lady, he looks and speaks so like a gentleman." "Poor creature! he must be attended to, and a medical man sent for directly, as he is certainly not sensible *now*." "Hark! he is raving again, and all about his wife, and I cannot tell what." "I should like to see him," said Lady Alberry, whose heart always yearned toward



the afflicted; "and I think that I am myself no bad doctor." Accordingly she entered the room, just as the sick man exclaimed in his delirium, "Cruel Sir James! I a fraudulent—— O! my dearest Anna!" . . . and Lady Alberry recognized, in the poor raving being before her, the calumniated Burford! "I know him!" she cried, bursting into tears: "we will be answerable for all expenses." She then went in search of Sir James; and having prepared him as tenderly as she could for the painful scene which awaited him, she led him to the bedside of the unconscious invalid: then, while Sir James, shocked and distressed beyond measure, interrogated the landlady, Lady Alberry examined the nearly threadbare coat of the *supposed rich man*, which lay on the bed, and searched for the slenderly-filled purse, of which he had himself spoken. She found there Sir James's letter, which had, she doubted not, occasioned his journey and his illness; and which, therefore, in an agony of repentant feeling, her husband tore into atoms. In the same pocket he found Annabel's confession; and when they left the chamber, having vainly waited in hopes of being recognized by the poor invalid, they returned to their fellow-travellers, carrying with them the evidences of Burford's scanty means, in corroboration of the tale of suffering and fatigue which they had to relate. "See," said Lady Alberry, holding up the coat, and emptying the purse on the table, "are these the signs of opulence? and is travelling on foot, in a hot June day, a proof of splendid living?"—while the harsh

creditor, as he listened to the tale of delirium, and read the confession of Annabel, regretted the hasty credence which he had given to her falsehoods.

But what was best to be done? To send for Burford's wife; and till she arrived to nurse him, Sir James and Lady Alberry declared that they would not leave the inn. It was therefore agreed that the nephew should go to Burford's nouse in the barouche, and escort his wife back. He did so; and while Annabel, lost in painful thought, was walking on the road, she saw the barouche driving up, with her young fellow-traveller in it. As it requires great suffering to subdue such overwceining vanity as Annabel's, her first thought on seeing him was that her youthful beau was a young heir, who had travelled in disguise, and was now come in state to make her an offer! She therefore blushed with pleasure as he approached, and received his bow with a countenance of joy. But his face expressed no answering pleasure; and, coldly passing her, he said his business was with her mother, who, alarmed, she scarcely knew why, stood trembling at the door; nor was she less alarmed when the feeling youth told his errand, in broken and faltering accents, and delivered Lady Alberry's letter. "Annabel must go with me!" said her mother, in a deep and solemn tone. Then, lowering her voice, because unwilling to reprove her before a stranger, she added, "Yes, my child! thou must go to see the effects of thy errors, and take sad but salutary warning for the rest of thy life.

We shall not detain you long, sir," she continued, turning to Charles Danvers: "our *slender wardrobe* can be soon prepared."

In a short time, the calm but deeply suffering wife, and the weeping, humbled daughter, were on their road to the inn. The mother scarcely spoke during the whole of the journey; but she seemed to pray a great deal; and the young man was so affected with the subdued anguish of the one, and the passionate grief of the other, that he declared to Lady Alberry, he had never been awakened to such serious thoughts before, and hoped to be the better for the journey through the whole of his existence; while, in her penitent sorrow, he felt inclined to forget Annabel's fault, coquetry, and affectation.

When they reached the inn, the calmness of the wife was entirely overcome by the sight of Lady Alberry, who opened her arms to receive her with the kindness of an attached friend; whispering as she did so, "He has been sensible; and he knew Sir James—knew him as an affectionate friend and nurse!" "Gracious Heaven, I thank thee," she replied, hastening to his apartment, leading the reluctant Annabel along. But he did not know them; and his wife was at first speechless with sorrow; at length, recovering her calmness, she said, "See! dear unhappy girl! to what thy sinfulness has reduced thy fond father! Humble thyself, my child, before the great Being whom thou hast offended; and own his mercy in the awful warning!" "I am humbled, I am warned, I trust," cried Annabel, falling on her

knees ; “ but if he die, what will become of me ? ” “ What will become of us *all* ? ” replied the mother, shuddering at the bare idea of losing him, but preparing, with forced composure, for her important duties. Trying ones indeed they were, through many days and nights, that the wife and daughter had to watch beside the bed of the unconscious Burford. The one heard herself kindly invoked, and tenderly desired, and her *absence wondered at* ; while the other never heard her name mentioned, during the ravings of fever, without heartrending upbraidings and just reproofs. But Burford’s life was granted to the prayers of agonizing affection ; and, when recollection returned, he had the joy of knowing that his reputation was cleared, that his angry creditors were become his kind friends, and that Sir James Alberry lamented, with bitter regret, that he could no longer prove his confidence in him by making him his partner. But, notwithstanding this blight to his prospects, Burford piously blessed the event which had so salutary an influence on his offending child, and had taught her a lesson which she was not likely to forget. Lady Alberry, however, thought that the lesson was not yet sufficiently complete ; for, though Annabel might be cured of lying by the consequences of her falsehoods, the vanity which prompted them might still remain uncorrected. Therefore, as Annabel had owned that it was the wish not to lose consequence in the eyes of her supposed admirer which had led her to her last fatal falsehood, Lady Alberry, with the mother’s

approbation, contrived a plan for laying the axe, if possible, to the root of her vanity ; and she took the earliest opportunity of asking Charles Danvers, in her presence, and that of her mother, some particulars concerning what passed in the coach, and his opinion on the subject. As she expected, he gave a softened and favorable representation ; and would not allow that he did not form a favorable opinion of his fair companion. "What ! Charles," said she, "do you pretend to deny that you mimicked her voice and manner?" She then repeated all that he had said, and his declaration that her evident vanity and coquetry steeled his heart against her, copying, at the same time, his accurate mimicry of Annabel's manner ; nor did she rest till she had drawn from him a full avowal that what he had asserted was true ; for Lady Alberry was not a woman to be resisted ; while the mortified, humbled, but corrected Annabel could only hide her face in her mother's bosom ; who, while she felt for the salutary pangs inflicted on her, mingled caresses with her tears, and whispered in her ear that the mortification which she endured was but for a moment ; and the benefit would be, she trusted, of eternal duration. The lesson was now complete indeed. Annabel found that she had not only, by her lies of vanity, deprived her father of a lucrative business, but that she had exposed herself to the ridicule and contempt of that very being who had been the cause of her error ; and, in the depth of her humbled and contrite heart, she resolved from that moment to struggle with her besetting sins, and

subdue them. Nor was the resolve of that trying moment ever broken. But when her father, whose original destination had been the Church, was led by his own wishes to take orders, and was, in process of time, inducted into a considerable living, in the gift of Sir James Alberry, Anabel rivalled her mother in performing the duties of her new station; and when she became a wife and mother herself, she had a mournful satisfaction in relating the above story to her children; bidding them beware of all lying; but more especially of that common lie, the lie of vanity, whether it be active or passive. "Not," said she, "that retributive justice in this world, like that which attended mine, may always follow your falsehoods, or those of others; but because all lying is contrary to the moral law of God; and that the liar, as Scripture tells us, is not only liable to punishment and disgrace here, but will be the object of certain and more awful punishment in the world to come."

The following tale illustrates the PASSIVE LIE OF VANITY.

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### UNEXPECTED DISCOVERIES.

THERE are two sayings—the one derived from Divine, the other from human authority—the truth of which is continually forced upon us by experience. They are these: "A prophet is not without honor, except in his own country;" and "No man is a hero to his valet-de-chambre."



“Familiarity breeds contempt,” is also a proverb to the same effect; and they all three bear upon the tendency in our natures to undervalue the talents, and the claims to distinction, of those with whom we are closely connected and associated; and on our incapability to believe that they whom we have always considered as our equals only, or perhaps as our inferiors, can be to the rest of the world objects of admiration and respect.

No one was more convinced of the truth of these sayings than Darcy Pennington, the only child of a pious and virtuous couple, who thought him the best of sons, and one of the first of geniuses; but, as they were not able to persuade the rest of the family of this latter truth, when they died, Darcy’s uncle and guardian insisted on his going into a merchant’s counting-house in London, instead of being educated for one of the learned professions. Darcy had a mind too well disciplined to rebel against his guardian’s authority. He therefore submitted to his allotment in silence, resolving that his love of letters and the muses should not interfere with his duties to his employer; but he devoted all his leisure hours to literary pursuits; and, as he had real talents, he was at length raised, from the unpaid contributor to the poetical columns in a newspaper, to the *paid* writer in a popular magazine; while his poems, signed *Alfred*, became objects of eager expectation. But Darcy’s own family and friends could not have been more surprised at his growing celebrity than he himself was; for he was a



sincere, humble Christian; and having been accustomed to bow to the opinion of those whom he considered as his superiors in intellect and knowledge, he could scarcely believe in his own eminence. But it was precious to his heart, rather than to his vanity; as it enabled him to indulge those benevolent feelings which his small income had hitherto restrained. At length he published a duodecimo volume of poems and hymns, still under the name of Alfred, which was highly praised in reviews and journals, and a strong desire was expressed to know who the modest, promising, and pious writer was.

Notwithstanding, Darcy could not prevail upon himself to disclose his name. He visited his native town every year, and in the circle of his family and friends was still considered only as a good sort of lad, who had been greatly overrated by his parents—was just suited for the situation in which he had been placed—and was very fortunate to have been received into partnership with the merchant to whom he had been clerk. In vain did Darcy sometimes endeavor to hint that he was an author: he remembered the contempt with which his uncle, and relations, had read one of the earliest fruits of his muse, when exhibited by his fond father, and the advice given to burn such stuff, and not turn the head of a dull boy, by making him fancy himself a genius. Therefore, recollecting the wise saying quoted above, he feared that the news of his literary celebrity would not be received with pleasure, and that the affection with which he was now welcomed might

suffer diminution. Besides, thought he,—and then his heart rose in his throat, with a choking, painful feeling,—those tender parents, who would have enjoyed my little fame, are cold and unconscious now; and the ears to which my praises would have been sweet music, cannot hear; therefore methinks I have a mournful pleasure in keeping on that veil, the removal of which cannot confer pleasure on them. Consequently, he remained contented to be warmly welcomed at D—— for talents of an humble sort, such as his power for mending toys, making kites, and rabbits on the wall; which talents endeared him to all the children of his family and friends; and, through them, to their parents. Yet it may be asked, Was it possible that a young man so gifted, could conceal his abilities from observation?

O, yes. Darcy, to borrow Addison's metaphor concerning himself, though he could draw a bill for £1000, had never any small change in his pocket. Like him, he could write, but he could not talk: he was discouraged in a moment; and the slightest rebuff made him hesitate to a painful degree. He had, however, some flattering moments, even amidst his relations and friends; for he heard them repeating his verses and singing his songs. He had also far greater joy in hearing his hymns in places of public worship; and then, too much choked with grateful emotion to join in the devotional chorus himself, he used to feel his own soul raised to heaven upon those wings which he had furnished for the souls of others. At such moments, he longed to discover

himself as the author ; but was withheld by the fear that his songs would cease to be admired, and his hymns would lose their usefulness, if it were known that he had written them. However, he resolved to *feel his way* ; and once, on hearing a song of his commended, he ventured to observe, "I think I can write as good a one." "You !" cried his uncle : "what a conceited boy ! I remember that you used to scribble verses when a child ; but I thought you had been laughed out of that nonsense." "My dear fellow, nature never meant thee for a poet, believe me," said one of his cousins, conceitedly,—a young collegian. "No, no: like the girl in the drama, thou wouldst make 'love' and 'joy' rhyme, and know no better." "But I have written, and I can rhyme," replied Darcy, coloring a little. "Indeed !" replied his formal aunt : "well, Mr. Darcy Pennington, it really would be very amusing to see your erudite productions : perhaps you will indulge us some day" "I will ; and then you will probably change your opinion." Soon after, Darcy wrote an anonymous prose tale in one volume, interspersed with poetry, which had even a greater run than his other writings ; and it was attributed first to one person, and then to another ; while his publisher was excessively pressed to declare the name of the author ; but he did not himself know it, as he only knew Darcy, *avowedly*, under a feigned name. But at length Darcy resolved to disclose his secret, at least to his relatives and friends at D—— ; and just as the second edition of his tale was nearly completed, he

set off for his native place, taking with him the manuscript, full of the printer's marks, to prove that he was the author of it.

He had one *irresistible* motive for thus walking out from his *incognito*, like Homer's deities from their cloud. He had fallen in love with his second cousin, Julia Vane, an heiress, and his uncle's ward, and had become jealous of himself, as he had, for some months, wooed her in anonymous poetry, which she, he found, attributed to a gentleman in the neighborhood, whose name he knew not; and she had often declared that, such was her passion for poetry, he who could woo her in beautiful verse was alone likely to win her heart.

On the very day of his arrival, he said in the family circle that he had brought down a little manuscript of his own which he wished to read to them. O! the comical grimaces! the suppressed laughter, growing and swelling, however, till it could be restrained no longer, which was the result of this request! And O! the looks of consternation when Darcy produced the manuscript from his pocket! "Why, Darcy," said his uncle, "this is really a word and a blow; but you cannot read it to-night: we are engaged." "Certainly, Mr. Darcy Pennington," said his aunt, "if you wish to read your astonishing productions, we are bound in civility to hear them; but we are all going to Sir Hugh Belson's, and shall venture to take you with us, though it is a great favor and privilege to be permitted to go on such an occasion; for a gentleman is staying there who has written such a sweet book! It is

only just out, yet it cannot be had; because the first edition is sold, and the second is not finished. So Sir Hugh, for whom your uncle is exerting himself against the next election, has been so kind as to invite us to hear the author read his own work. This gentleman does not, indeed, *own* that he wrote it; still, he does not *deny* it; and it is clear, by his *manner*, that he did write it, and that he would be very sorry not to be considered as the writer." "Very well, then: the pleasure of hearing another author read his own work shall be delayed," replied Darcy, smiling. "Perhaps, when you have heard this gentleman's, you will not be so eager to read yours, Darcy," said Julia Vane; "for you *used* to be a modest man." Darcy sighed, looked significantly, but remained silent.

In the evening they went to Sir Hugh Belson's, where, in the Captain Eustace, who was to delight the company, Darcy recognized the gentleman who had been pointed out to him as the author of several meagre performances handed about in manuscript in certain circles; which owed their celebrity to the birth and fashion of the writer, and to the bribery which is always administered to the self-love of those who are the *select few* chosen to see and judge on such occasions.

Captain Eustace now prepared to read; but when he named the title of the book which he held in his hand, Darcy started from his seat in surprise; for it was the title of his own work! But there might be two works with the same title;



and he sat down again ; but when the reader continued, and he could doubt no longer, he again started up, and, with stuttering eagerness, said, " Wh-wh—who, sir, did you say, wrote this book ? " " I have named no names, sir," replied Eustace, conceitedly : " the author is unknown, and wishes to remain so." " Mr. Darcy Pennington," cried his aunt, " sit down and be quiet ;" and he obeyed. " Mr. Pennington," said Sir Hugh, affectedly, " the violet must be sought, and is *discovered* with difficulty, you know ; for it shrinks from observation, and loves the shade." Darcy bowed assent ; but fixed his eyes on the discovered violet before him with such an equivocal expression, that Eustace was disconcerted ; and the more so, when Darcy, who could not but feel the ludicrous situation in which he was placed, hid his face in his handkerchief, and was evidently shaking with laughter. " Mr. Darcy Pennington, I am really ashamed of you," whispered his aunt ; and Darcy recovered his composure. He had now two hours of great enjoyment. He heard that book admirably read which he had intended to read the next day, and knew that he should read ill. He heard that work applauded to the skies as the work of another, which would, he feared, have been faintly commended if known to be his ; and he saw the fine eyes of the woman he loved drowned in tears, by the power of his own simple pathos. The poetry in the book was highly admired also ; and when Eustace paused to take breath, Julia whispered in his ear, " Captain Eustace is the gentleman who, I have every

reason to believe, wrote some anonymous poetry sent me by the post; for Captain Eustace pays me, as you see, marked attention; and as he denies that he wrote the verses, exactly as he denies that he wrote the book which he is now reading, it is very evident that he wrote both." "I dare say," replied Darcy, coloring with resentment, "that he as much wrote the *one* as he wrote the *other*." "What do you mean, Darcy? There can be no doubt of the fact; and I own that I cannot be insensible to such talent; for poetry and poets are my passion, you know; and in his authorship I forget his plainness. Do you not think that a woman would be justified in loving a man who writes so morally, so piously, and so delightfully?" "Certainly," replied Darcy, eagerly grasping her hand, "provided his conduct be in unison with his writings; and I advise you to give the writer in question *your whole heart*."

After the reading was over, the delighted audience crowded around the reader, whose manner of receiving their thanks was such as to make every one but Darcy believe the work was his own; and never was the PASSIVE LIE OF VANITY more completely exhibited; while Darcy, intoxicated, as it were, by the feelings of gratified authorship, and the hopes excited by Julia's words, thanked him again and again for the admirable manner in which he had read the book; declaring, with great earnestness, that he could not have done it such justice himself; adding, that this evening was the happiest of his life.

"Mr. Darcy Pennington, what ails you?" cried



his aunt: "You really are not like yourself!" "Hold your tongue, Darcy," said his uncle, drawing him on one side: "do not be such a forward puppy: who ever questioned, or cared, whether you could have done it justice or not? But here is the carriage; and I am glad you have no longer an opportunity of thus exposing yourself by your literary and critical raptures, which sit as ill upon you as the caressings of the ass in the fable did on him, when he pretended to compete with the lap-dog in fondling his master."

During the drive home, Darcy did not speak a word—not only because he was afraid of his severe uncle and aunt, but because he was meditating how he should make that discovery, on the success of which hung his dearest hopes. He was also communing with his own heart, in order to bring it back to that safe humility out of which it had been led by the flattering and unexpected events of the evening. "Well," said he, while they drew round the fire, "as it is not late, suppose I read *my* work to you *now*. I assure you that it is quite as good as that which you have heard." "Mr. Darcy Pennington, you really quite alarm me," cried his aunt. "Why so?" "Because I fear that you are a little *delirious*!" On which Darcy nearly laughed himself into convulsions. "Let me feel your pulse, Darcy," said his uncle very gravely: "too quick. I shall send for advice, if you are not better to-morrow: you look so flushed, and your eyes are so bright!" "My dear uncle," replied Darcy, "I shall be quite well if you will but hear my manuscript before we go

to bed." They now all looked at each other with increased alarm; and Julia, in order to please him, (for she really loved him,) said, "Well, Darcy, if you insist upon it;" but interrupting her, he suddenly started up, and exclaimed, "No: on second thoughts, I will not read it till Captain Eustace and Sir Hugh and his family can be present; and they will be here the day after to-morrow." "What! read your nonsense to them!" cried his uncle. "Poor fellow! poor fellow!" But Darcy was gone! he had caught Julia's hand to his lips, and quitted the room, leaving his relations to wonder, to fear, and to pity. But as Darcy was quite composed the next day, they all agreed that he must have drunk more wine than he or they had been aware of the preceding evening. But though Darcy was willing to wait till the ensuing evening before he discovered his secret to the rest of the family, he could not be easy till he had disclosed it to Julia; for he was mortified to find that the pious, judicious Julia Vane had, for one moment, believed that a mere man of the world, like Captain Eustace, could have written such verses as he had anonymously addressed to her—verses breathing the very quintessence of pure love, and full of anxious interest not only for her temporal but her eternal welfare. "No, no," said he: "she shall not remain in such a degrading error one moment longer;" and having requested a private interview with her, he disclosed the truth. "What! are *you*—can *you* be—did *you* write all?" she exclaimed, in broken accents; while Darcy gently reproached her for

having believed that a mere worldly admirer could so have written : however, she justified herself by declaring how impossible it was to suspect that a man of honor, as Eustace seemed, could be so base as to assume a merit which was not his own. Here she paused, turning away from Darcy's penetrating look, covered with conscious blushes, ashamed that he should see how pleased she was. But she readily acknowledged her sorrow at having been betrayed, by the unworthy artifice of Eustace, into encouraging his attentions ; and was eager to concert with Darcy the best plan for revealing the surprising secret.

The evening, so eagerly anticipated by Darcy and Julia, now arrived ; and great was the consternation of all the rest of the family, when Darcy took a manuscript out of his pocket, and began to open it. "The fellow is certainly possessed," thought his uncle. "Mr. Darcy Pennington," whispered his aunt, "I shall faint if you persist in exposing yourself !" "Darcy, I will shut you up if you proceed," whispered his uncle ; "for you must positively be mad." "Let him go on, dear uncle," said Julia : "I am *sure* you will be delighted, or *ought* to be so ;" and, spite of his uncle's threats and whispers, he addressed Captain Eustace thus :

"Allow me, sir, to thank you again for the more than justice which you did my humble performance the other evening. Till I heard you read it, I was unconscious that it had so much merit ; and I again thank you for the highest gratification which, as an author, I ever received." New

terror seized every one of his family who heard him, except Julia; while wonder filled Sir Hugh and the rest of his party—Eustace excepted: he knew that he was not the author of the work; therefore he could not dispute the fact that the real author now stood before him; and blushes of detected falsehood covered his cheek; but ere he could falter out a reply, Darcy's uncle and sons seized him by the arm, and insisted on speaking with him in another room. Darcy, laughing violently, endeavored to shake them off, but in vain. "Let him alone," said Julia, smiling, and coming forward. "Darcy's 'eye may be in a fine frenzy rolling,' as you have all of you owned him to be a poet; but other frenzy than that of a poet he has *not*, I assure you—so pray set him at liberty: *I* will be answerable for his sanity." "What does all this mean?" said his uncle, as he and his sons unwillingly obeyed. "It means," said Darcy, "that I hope not to quit this room till I have had the delight of hearing these yet unpublished poems of mine read by Captain Eustace. Look, sir," continued he, "here is a signature well known, no doubt, to you—that of *Alfred*." "Are you indeed Alfred, the celebrated Alfred?" faltered out Eustace. "I believe so," he replied with a smile; "though on some occasions, you know, it is difficult to prove one's *personal identity*." "True," answered Eustace, turning over the manuscript to hide his confusion. "And I, Captain Eustace," said Julia, "have had the great satisfaction of discovering that my unknown poetical correspondent is my long cherished friend

and cousin, Darcy Pennington. Think how satisfactory this discovery has been to *me!*" "Certainly, madam;" he replied, turning pale with emotion; for he not only saw his *Passive Lies of Vanity* detected—though Darcy had too much Christian forbearance even to insinuate that he intended to appropriate to himself the fame of another—but he also saw, in spite of the kindness with which she addressed him, that he had lost Julia, and that Darcy had probably gained her. "What is all this?" cried Sir Hugh at last, who, with the uncle and aunt, had listened in silent wonder. "Why, Eustace, I thought you owned that?" "That I deny: I *owned nothing*;" he eagerly replied. "You *insisted* on it, nay, everybody insisted, that I was the *author* of the beautiful work which I read, and of other things; and if Mr. Pennington asserts that he is the author, I give him joy of his genius and his fame." "What do I hear?" cried the aunt: "Mr. Darcy Pennington a genius, and famous, and I not suspect it!" "Impossible!" cried his uncle, pettishly; "that dull fellow turn out a wit! It cannot be. What! are you Alfred, boy? I cannot credit it; for if so, I have been dull indeed;" while his sons seemed to feel as much mortification as surprise. "My dear uncle," said Darcy, "I am now a professed author. I wrote the work which you heard last night. Here it is in the manuscript, as returned by the printer; and here is the last proof of the second edition, which I received at the post-office just now, directed to A. B.; which is, I think, *proof positive* that I may be

Alfred also, who, by your certainly *impartial* praises, is for *this* evening, at least in his own eyes, elevated into ALFRED THE GREAT."

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## CHAPTER III.

### ON THE LIES OF FLATTERY.

THE Lies of Flattery are next on my list.

These lies are, generally speaking, not only unprincipled, but offensive; and though they are usually told to conciliate good-will, the flatterer often fails in his attempt; for his intended dupe frequently sees through his art, and he excites indignation where he meant to obtain regard. Those who know aught of human nature as it really is, and do not throw the radiance of their own Christian benevolence over it, must be well aware that *few* persons hear with complacency the praises of others, even where there is no competition between the parties praised and themselves. Therefore, the objects of excessive flattery are painfully conscious that the praises bestowed on them, in the hearing of their acquaintances, will not only provoke those auditors to undervalue their pretensions, but to accuse them of believing in and enjoying the gross flattery offered to them. There are no persons, in my opinion, with whom it is so difficult to keep up "the relations of peace and amity," as flatterers by system and habit: those



persons, I mean, who deal out their flatteries on the same principle as boys throw a handful of burs. However unskilfully the burs are thrown, the chances are that some will stick ; and flatterers expect that some of their compliments will dwell with, and impose on, their intended dupe. Perhaps their calculation is not, generally considered, an erroneous one ; but if there be any of their fellow-creatures with whom the sensitive and the discerning may be permitted to loathe the association, it is with those who presume to address them in the language of compliment, too violent and inappropriate to deceive even for a moment ; while they discover on their lips the flickering sneer of contempt contending with its treacherous smile, and mark their wily eye looking round in search of some responsive one, to which it can communicate their sense of the uttered falsehood, and their mean exultation over their imagined dupe. The lies of benevolence, even when they can be resolved into lies of flattery, may be denominated amiable lies, but the lie of flattery is usually uttered by the bad-hearted and censorious ; therefore to the term LIE OF FLATTERY might be added an alias ;—*alias* the LIE OF MALEVOLENCE.

Coarse and indiscriminating flatterers lay it down as a rule, that they are to flatter all persons on the qualities which they have not. Hence, they flatter the plain on their beauty ; the weak, on their intellect ; the dull, on their wit ; believing, in the sarcastic narrowness of their conceptions, that no one possesses any self-knowledge, but that every one implicitly believes the truth of

the eulogy bestowed. This erroneous view taken by the *flatterer* of the penetration of the *flattered*, is common only in those who have more cunning than intellect; more shrewdness than penetration; and whose knowledge of the weakness of our nature has been gathered, not from deep study of the human heart, but from the depravity of their own, or from the pages of ancient and modern satirists: those who have a mean, malignant pleasure in believing in the absence of all moral truth amongst their usual associates; and are glad to be able to comfort themselves for their own conscious dereliction from a high moral standard, by the conviction that they are, at least, as *good as their neighbors*. Yes: my experience tells me that the above-mentioned rule of flattery is acted upon only by the half-enlightened, who take for superiority of intellect that *base* low cunning,

— “which, in fools, supplies,  
And amply too, the place of being wise.”

But the deep observer of human nature knows that where there is real intellect, there are discernment and self-knowledge also; and that the really intelligent are aware to how much praise and admiration they are entitled, be it encomium on their personal or mental qualifications.

I beg to give one illustration of the Lie of Flattery, in the following tale, of which the offending heroine is a *female*; though, as men are the *licensed* flatterers of women, I needed not to have feared the imputation of want of candor, had I taken my example from one of the wiser sex.

## THE TURBAN;

OR, THE LIE OF FLATTERY.

SOME persons are such determined flatterers, both by nature and habit, that they flatter unconsciously, and almost involuntarily. Such a flatterer was Jemima Aldred; but, as the narrowness of her fortune made her unable to purchase the luxuries of life in which she most delighted, she was also a *conscious* and *voluntary* flatterer whenever she was with those who had it in their power to indulge her favorite inclinations.

There was one distinguished woman in the circle of her acquaintance, whose favor she was particularly desirous of gaining, and who was therefore the constant object of her flatteries. This lady, who was rendered, by her situation, her talents, and her virtues, an object of earthly worship to many of her associates, had a good-natured indolence about her, which made her receive the incense offered, as if she believed in its sincerity. But the flattery of young Jemima was so gross, and so indiscriminate, that it sometimes converted the usual gentleness of Lady Delaval's nature into gall; and she felt indignant at being supposed capable of relishing adulation so excessive, and devotion so servile. But, as she was full of Christian benevolence, and, consequently, her first desire was to do good, she allowed pity for the poor girl's ignorance to conquer resentment, and laid a plan, in order to correct and amend her, if *possible*, by salutary mortification.

Accordingly, she invited Jemima, and some other young ladies, to spend a whole day with her at her house in the country. But, as the truly benevolent are always reluctant to afflict any one, even though it be to *improve*, Lady Delaval would have shrunk from the task which she had imposed on herself, had not Jemima excited her into perseverance, by falling repeatedly and grossly into her besetting sin during the course of the day. For instance : Lady Delaval, who usually left the choice of her ribands to her milliner, as she was not studious of her personal appearance, wore colors at breakfast that morning which she thought ill-suited both to her years and complexion ; and having asked her guests how they liked her scarf and ribands, they pronounced them to be beautiful. “ But surely they do not become my olive, ill-looking skin ! ” “ They are certainly not becoming,” was the ingenuous reply of all but Jemima Aldred, who persisted in asserting that the color was as becoming as it was brilliant ; adding, “ I do not know what dear Lady Delaval means by undervaluing her own clear complexion.” “ The less that is said about that the better, I believe,” she dryly replied, not trying to conceal the sarcastic smile which played upon her lip, and feeling strengthened, by this new instance of Jemima’s duplicity, to go on with her design ; but Jemima thought she had endeared herself to her by flattering her personal vanity ; and, while her companions frowned reproach for *her insincerity*, she wished for an opportunity of reproving *their*

*rudeness.* After tea, Lady Delaval desired her maid to bring her down the foundation for a turban, which she was going to pin up, and some other finery prepared for the same purpose ; and in a short time the most splendid materials for millinery shone upon the table. When she began her task, her other guests, Jemima excepted, worked also, but she was sufficiently employed, she said, in watching the creative and tasteful fingers of her friend. At first, Lady Delaval made the turban of silver tissue ; and Jemima was in ecstasies ; but the next moment she declared that covering to be too simple ; and Jemima thought so too ; while she was in equal ecstasies at the effect of a gaudy many-colored gauze which replaced its modest costliness. But still her young companions openly preferred the silver covering, declaring that the gay one could only be tolerated if nothing else of showy ornament were superadded. They gave, however, their opinion in vain. Colored stones, a gold band, and a green spun-glass feather, were all in their turn heaped upon this showy head-dress, while Jemima exulted over every fresh addition, and admired it as a new proof of Lady Delaval's taste. "Now, then, it is completed," cried Lady Delaval ; "but no ; suppose I add a scarlet feather to the green one?" "O ! that would be superb ;" and having given this desirable finish to her performance, Jemima declared it to be perfect ; but the rest of the company were too honest to commend it. Lady Delaval then put it on her head ; and it was as unbecoming as it was ugly ; but

Jemima exclaimed that her dear friend had never worn any thing before in which she looked so well; adding, "But then *she* looks well in *every thing*. However, that lovely turban would become any one." "Try how it would fit you!" said Lady Delaval, putting it on her head. Jemima looked in a glass, and saw that to her short, small person, little face, and little turned-up nose, such an enormous mass of finery was the destruction of all comeliness; but, while the bystanders laughed immoderately at her appearance, Jemima was loud in her admiration, and volunteered a wish to wear it at some public place; "for I think I *do* look so well in it!" cried Jemima. "If so," said her hostess, "you, *young ladies*, on this occasion, have neither taste nor eyes;" while Jemima danced about the room, exulting in her heavy head-dress, in the triumph of her falsehood, and in the supposed superior ascendancy it had gained her over her hostess above that of her more sincere companions. Nor, when Lady Delaval expressed her fear that the weight might be painful, would she allow it to be removed; but she declared that she liked the burden. At parting, Lady Delaval, in a tone of great significance, told her that she should *hear from her the next day*. The next morning Jemima often dwelt on these marked words, impatient for an explanation of them. Between twelve and one o'clock, a servant of Lady Delaval brought a letter and a bandbox.

The letter was first opened; and was as follows:



“DEAR JEMIMA :

“As I know that you have long wished to visit my niece, Lady Ormsby, and also to attend the astronomical lecture on the grand transparent orrery, which is to be given at the public rooms this evening, for the benefit of the Infirmary, though your praiseworthy prudence prevented you from subscribing to it, I have great pleasure in enclosing you a ticket for the lecture, and in informing you that I will call and take you to dinner at Lady Ormsby’s at four o’clock, whence you and I, and the rest of the party, (which will be a splendid one,) shall adjourn to the lecture. . . .”

“How kind ! how very kind !” exclaimed Jemima ; but, in her heart, imputing these favors to her recent flatteries ; and reading no farther, she ran to her mother’s apartment to declare the joyful news. “O ! mamma !” exclaimed she, “how fortunate it was that I made up my dyed gauze when I did ! And I can wear natural flowers in my hair ; and they are so becoming, as well as cheap.” She then returned to her own room, to finish the letter and explore the contents of the box. But what was her consternation on reading the following words : . . .

“But I shall take you to the dinner, and I give you the ticket for the lecture, only on this express condition—that you wear the accompanying turban, which was decorated according to *your* taste and judgment, and in which you were conscious of looking so well ! Every *additional* ornament was bestowed to please you ;

and as I know that your wish will be not to deprive me of a head-dress in which your *partial* eyes thought that I looked so *charmingly*, I positively assure you that no consideration shall ever induce me to wear it; and that I expect you to meet my summons, arrayed in your youthful loveliness and my turban."

Jemima sat in a sort of stupor after perusing this epistle; and when she started from it, it was to carry the letter and the turban to her mother. "Read that! and look at that!" she exclaimed, pointing to the turban. "Why to be sure, Jemima, Lady Delaval must be making game of you," she replied. "What could produce such an absurd requisition?" When called upon to answer this question, Jemima blushed; and, for the first time, feeling some compunctious visitings of conscience, she almost hesitated to own that the annoying conditions were the consequence of her flatteries. Still, to comply with them was impossible; and to go to the dinner and lecture without them, and thereby perhaps affront Lady Delaval, was impossible also. "What! expect me to hide my pretty hair under that preposterous mountain? Never, never!" Vainly, now, did she try to admire it; and she felt its weight insupportable. "To be sure," said she to herself, "Captain Leslie and George Vaux will dine at Lady Ormsby's, and go to the lecture; but then they will not bear to look at me in this frightful head-dress, and will so quiz me; and I am sure they will think me too great a *quiz* to

sit by! No, no: much as I wish to go, and I do so very, very much wish it, I cannot go on these cruel conditions." "But what excuse can you make to Lady Delaval?" "I must tell her that I have a bad toothache, and cannot go; and I will write her a note to say so; and at the same time return the ugly turban." She did so; but when she saw Lady Delaval pass to the fine dinner, and heard the carriages at night going to the crowded lecture, she shed tears of bitterness and regret, and lamented that she had not dared to go without the conditional and detestable turban. The next day she saw Lady Delaval's carriage drive up to the door, and also saw the servant take a handbox out. "O dear, mamma," cried Jemima, "I protest that ridiculous old woman has brought her ugly turban back again!" and it was with a forced smile of welcome that she greeted Lady Delaval. That lady entered the room with a graver and more dignified mien than usual; for she came to reprove, and, she hoped, to amend an offender against those principles of truth which she honored, and to which she uniformly acted up. Just before Lady Delaval appeared, Jemima recollected that she was to have the toothache; therefore she tied up her face, adding a PRACTICAL LIE to the many already told; for one lie is sure to make many. "I was sorry to find that you were not able to accompany me to the dinner and lecture," said she, "and were kept at home by the toothache. Was that your only reason for staying at home?" "Certainly, madam: can you doubt it?" "Yes; for

I have strong suspicion that the toothache is a pretence, not a reality." "This from you, Lady Delaval! my once kind friend!" "Jemima, I am come to prove myself a far kinder friend than ever I did before. I am glad to find you alone; because I should not have liked to reprove a child before her mother." Lady Delaval then reproached her astonished auditor with the mean habit of flattery in which she was so apt to indulge: assuring her that she had never been for one moment her dupe, and had insisted on her wearing the turban in order to punish her despicable duplicity. "Had you not acted thus," continued Lady Delaval, "I meant to have taken you to the dinner and lecture without conditions; but I wished to inflict on you a salutary punishment, in hopes of convincing you that there are no qualities so safe, or so pleasing, as truth and ingenuousness. I saw you cast an alarmed look at the hat-box," she added, in a gayer tone; "but fear not: the turban is no more; and, in its stead, I have taken the liberty of bringing you a Leghorn bonnet; and should you, while you wear it, feel any desire to flatter, in your usual degrading manner, may it remind you of this conversation, and its *cause*; and make your present mortification the means of your future good." At this moment Jemima's mother entered the room, exclaiming: "O Lady Delaval! I am glad you are come! my poor child's toothache is so bad! and how unfortunate that——" Lady Delaval cast on the mistaken mother a look of severe reproof, and on the daughter one of pity

and unavailing regret; for she felt that, for the child who is hourly exposed to the contagion of an unprincipled parent's example, there can be little chance for amendment; and she hastened to her carriage, convinced that for poor Jemima Aldred her labors of Christian duty had been exerted in vain. She would have soon found how just her conviction was, had she heard the dialogue between the mother and daughter, as soon as she drove off. Jemima dried up her hypocritical tears, and exclaimed, "A cross, methodistical creature! I am glad she is gone!" "What do you mean, child? and what is all this about?" Jemima having told her, she exclaimed, "Why the woman is mad! What! object to a little harmless flattery! and call that lying, indeed! Nonsense! it is all a pretence. She hate *flattery*! no indeed: if you were to tell her the truth, she would hate you like poison." "Very likely; but see, mamma, what she has given me. What a beautiful bonnet! But she owed it to me, for the trick she played me, and for her preaching." "Well, child," answered her mother, "let her preach to you every day, and welcome, if she comes, as to-day, full-handed."

Such was the effect of Lady Delaval's kind efforts, on a mother so teaching, and a daughter so taught; for indelible indeed are those habits of falsehood and disingenuousness which children acquire, whose parents do not make a *strict adherence* to truth the *basis* of their children's education, and punish all deviation from it with salutary rigor. But, whatever be the *excellences* or the

*errors* of parents or preceptors, there is one necessary thing for them to remember, or their excellences will be useless, and their faults irremediable; namely, that they are not to form their children for the present world alone: they are to educate them not merely as the *children of time*, but as the *heirs of eternity*.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### LIES OF FEAR.

I ONCE believed that the lie of fear was confined to the low and uneducated of both sexes, and to children; but further reflection and observation have convinced me that this is by no means the case; but that, as this lie springs from the want of *moral courage*, and as this defect is by no means confined to any class or age, the result of it, that fear of man which prompts to the lie of fear, must be universal also; though the nature of the dread may be various, and of different degrees of strength. For instance: a child or a servant (of course I speak of ill-educated children) breaks a toy or a glass, and denies having done so. Acquaintances forget to execute commissions intrusted to them, and either say they are executed when they are not, or make some false excuses for an omission which was the result of forgetfulness only. No persons are guilty of so many of this sort of lies, in the year, as negli-



gent correspondents: since excuses for not writing sooner are usually *lies of fear*—fear of having forfeited favor by too long a silence.

As the lie of fear always proceeds, as I have before observed, from a want of *moral courage*, it is often the result of want of resolution to say “no,” when “yes” is more agreeable to the feelings of the questioner. “Is not my new gown pretty?” “Is not my new hat becoming?” “Is not my coat of a good color?” There are few persons who have courage to say “no,” even to these trivial questions; though the negative would be *truth*, and the affirmative *falsehood*. And still less are they able to be honest in their replies to questions of a more delicate nature: “Is not my last work the best?” “Is not my wife beautiful?” “Is not my daughter agreeable?” “Is not my son a fine youth?”—those ensnaring questions, which contented and confiding egotism is only too apt to ask.

Fear of wounding the feelings of the interrogator prompts an affirmative answer. But, perhaps, a lie on these occasions is one of the least displeasing, because it may possibly proceed from a kind of aversion to give pain, and occasion disappointment; and has a *degree* of relationship, a distant family resemblance to the LIE OF BENEVOLENCE; though, when accurately analyzed, even this good-natured falsehood may be resolved into *selfish dread* of losing favor by speaking the truth. Of these *pseudo lies* of benevolence I shall treat in their turn; but I shall now proceed to relate a story to illustrate THE LIE OF FEAR, and its important results, under apparently unimportant circumstances.

## THE BANK-NOTE.

"ARE you returning immediately to Worcester?" said Lady Leslie, a widow residing near that city, to a young officer who was paying her a morning visit. "I am: can I do any thing for you there?" "Yes, you can do me a great kindness. My confidential servant, Baynes, is gone out for the day and night, and I do not like to trust my new footman, of whom I know nothing, to put this letter in the post-office, as it contains a fifty-pound note." "Indeed! that is a large sum to trust to the post." "Yes, but I am told it is the safest conveyance. It is, however, quite necessary that a person whom I can trust should put the letter in the box." "Certainly," replied Captain Freeland. Then, with an air that showed he considered *himself* as a person to be trusted, he deposited the letter in safety in his pocket-book, and took leave; promising he would return to dinner the next day, which was *Saturday*.

On his road, Freeland met some of his brother officers, who were going to pass the day and night at Great Malvern; and as they earnestly pressed him to accompany them, he wholly forgot the letter intrusted to his care; and, having dispatched his servant to Worcester, for his *sac-de-nuit*\* and other things, he turned back with his companions, and passed the rest of the day in that sauntering but amusing idleness—that *dolce far niente*,†

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\* Night-bag.

† Sweet doing nothing.

which may be reckoned *comparatively* virtuous, if it leads to the forgetfulness of little duties only, and is not attended by the positive infringement of greater ones. But, in not putting this important letter into the post, as he had engaged to do, Freeland violated a real duty; and he might have put it in at Malvern, had not the rencounter with his brother officers banished the commission given him entirely from his thoughts. Nor did he remember it till, as they rode through the village the next morning, on their way to Worcester, they met Lady Leslie walking in the road.

At sight of her, Freeland recollected with shame and confusion that he had not fulfilled the charge committed to him; and fain would he have passed her unobserved; for, as she was a woman of high fashion, great talents, and some severity, he was afraid that his negligence, if avowed, would not only cause him to forfeit her favor, but expose him to her powerful sarcasm.

To avoid being recognized was, however, impossible; and as soon as Lady Leslie saw him, she exclaimed, "O! Captain Freeland, I am so glad to see you! I have been quite uneasy concerning my letter since I gave it to your care; for it was of such consequence! Did you put it into the post yesterday?" "Certainly," replied Freeland, hastily, and in the hurry of the moment—"certainly. How could you, dear madam, doubt my obedience to your commands?" "Thank you! thank you!" cried she: "how you have relieved my mind!" He had so; but he had painfully burdened his own. To be sure, it was only a

white lie—the LIE OF FEAR. Still, he was not used to utter falsehood; and he felt the *meanness* and degradation of *this*. He had yet to learn that it was mischievous also; and that none can presume to say where the consequences of the most apparently trivial lie will end. As soon as Freeland parted with Lady Leslie, he bade his friends farewell, and putting spurs to his horse, scarcely slackened his pace till he had reached a general post-office, and deposited the letter in safety. “Now, then,” thought he, “I hope I shall be able to return and dine with Lady Leslie without shrinking from her penetrating eye.”

He found her, when he arrived, very pensive and absent; so much so, that she felt it necessary to apologize to her guests, informing them that Mary Benson, an old servant of hers, who was very dear to her, was seriously ill, and painfully circumstanced; and that she feared she had not done her duty by her. “To tell you the truth, Captain Freeland,” said she, speaking to him in a low voice, “I blame myself for not having sent for my confidential servant, who was not very far off, and dispatched him with the money, instead of trusting it to the post.” “It would have been better to have done so, *certainly!*” replied Freeland, deeply blushing. “Yes; for the poor woman to whom I sent it is not only herself on the point of being confined, but she has a sick husband, unable to be moved; and as (but owing to no fault of his) he is on the point of bankruptcy, his cruel landlord has declared that, if they do not pay their rent by to-morrow, he will

turn them out into the street, and seize the very bed they lie on ! However, as you put the letter into the post-office *yesterday*, they must get the fifty-pound note to-day, else they could not ; for there is no delivery of letters in London on a *Sunday*, you know." "True, very true," replied Freeland, in a tone which he vainly tried to render steady. "Therefore," continued Lady Leslie, "if you had told me, when we met, that the letter was not gone, I should have recalled Baynes, and sent him off by the mail to London ; and then he would have reached Somerstown, where the Bensons live, in good time ; but now, though I own it would be a comfort to me to send him, for fear of accident, I could not get him back again soon enough : therefore, I must let things take their chance ; and, as letters seldom miscarry, the only danger is that the note may be taken out." She might have talked an hour without answer or interruption ; for Freeland was too much shocked, too much conscience-stricken to reply, as he found that he had not only told a falsehood, but that, if he had had moral courage enough to tell the truth, the mischievous negligence of which he had been guilty could have been repaired ; but now, as Lady Leslie said, "it was too late !"

But, while Lady Leslie became talkative, and able to perform her duties to her friends, after she had thus unburdened her mind to Freeland, he grew every minute more absent, and more taciturn ; and though he could not eat with appetite, he *threw down*, rather than *drank*, repeated glasses of hock and champagne, to enable him to



rally his spirits, but in vain. A naturally ingenious and generous nature cannot shake off the first compunctious visitings of conscience for having committed an unworthy action, and having also been the means of injury to another. All on a sudden, however, his countenance brightened; and as soon as the ladies left the table, he started up, left his compliments and excuses with Lady Leslie's nephew, who presided at dinner; said he had a pressing call to Worcester; and when there, as the London mail was gone, he threw himself into a postchaise, and set off for Somerstown, which Lady Leslie had named as the residence of Mary Benson. "At least," said Freeland to himself with a lightened heart, "I shall now have the satisfaction of doing all I can to repair my fault." But owing to the delay occasioned by want of horses, and by finding the hostlers at the inns in bed, he did not reach London and the place of his destination till the wretched family had been dislodged; while the unhappy wife was weeping, not only over the disgrace of being so removed, and for her own and her husband's increased illness in consequence of it, but from the agonizing suspicion that the mistress and friend whom she had so long loved and relied upon, had disregarded the tale of her sorrows, and had refused to relieve her necessities! Freeland soon found a conductor to the mean lodging in which the Bensons had obtained shelter, for they were well known, and their hard fate was generally pitied; but it was some time before he could speak, as he stood by their bedside: he was choked with pain-



ful emotions at first—with pleasing emotions afterward; for his conscience smote him for the pain he had occasioned, and applauded him for the pleasure which he came to bestow. “I come,” said he, at length, (while the sufferers waited in almost angry wonder, to hear his reason for thus intruding on them,) “I come to tell you, from your kind friend, Lady Leslie——” “Then she has *not* forgotten me!” screamed out the poor woman, almost gasping for breath. “No, to be sure not: she could not forget you: she was incapable——” Here his voice wholly failed him. “Thank Heaven!” cried she, tears trickling down her pale cheek: “I can bear any thing now; for that was the bitterest part of all!” “My good woman,” said Freeland, “it was owing to a mistake: pshaw! no—it was owing to *my fault* that you did not receive a fifty-pound note by the post yesterday.” “Fifty pounds!” cried the poor man, wringing his hands: “why, that would have more than paid all we owed, and I could have gone on with my business, and our lives would not have been risked, nor I disgraced!” Freeland now turned away, unable to say a word more; but recovering himself, he again drew near them, and, throwing his purse to the agitated speaker, said, “There! get well! *only get well!* and whatever you want shall be yours! or I shall never lose this horrible choking again while I live!”

Freeland took a walk after this scene, and with hasty, rapid strides; the painful choking being his companion very often during the course of it; for he was haunted by the image of those whom

he had disgraced; and he could not help remembering that, however blamable his negligence might be, it was nothing, either in sinfulness or mischief, to the lie told to conceal it; and that, but for that LIE OF FEAR, the effect of his negligence might have been *repaired* in time.

But he was resolved that he would not leave Somerstown till he had seen these poor people settled in a good lodging. He therefore hired a conveyance for them, and superintended their removal that evening to apartments full of every necessary comfort. "My good friends," said he, "I cannot recall the mortification and disgrace which you have endured through my fault; but I trust that you will have gained, in the end, by leaving a cruel landlord, who had no pity for your unmerited poverty. Lady Leslie's note will, I trust, reach you to-morrow; but if not, I will make up the loss; therefore be easy! and when I go away, may I have the comfort of knowing that your removal has done you no harm!"

He then, but not till then, had courage to write to Lady Leslie, and tell her the whole truth; concluding his letter thus:

"If your interesting *protégés* have not suffered in their health, I shall not regret what has happened; because I trust that it will be a lesson to me through life, and teach me never to tell even the most apparently *trivial* white lie again. How unimportant this violation of truth appeared to me at the moment! and how sufficiently motivated! as it was to avoid falling in your estimation; but it was, you see, overruled for evil; and agony

of mind, disgrace, and perhaps risk of life, were the consequences of it to innocent individuals; not to mention my own pangs—the pangs of an upbraiding conscience. But forgive me, my dear Lady Leslie. However, I trust that this evil, so deeply repented of, will be blessed to us all; but it will be long before I forgive myself.”

Lady Leslie was delighted with this candid letter, though grieved by its painful details, while she viewed with approbation the amends which her young friend had made, and his modest disregard of his own exertions.

The note arrived in safety; and Freeland left the afflicted couple better in health, and quite happy in mind: as his bounty and Lady Leslie's had left them nothing to desire in a pecuniary point of view.

When Lady Leslie and he met, she praised his virtue, while she blamed his fault; and they fortified each other in the wise and moral resolution, never to violate truth again, even on the slightest occasion; as a lie, when told, however unimportant it may at the time appear, is like an arrow shot over a house, whose course is unseen, and may be unintentionally the cause, to some one, of agony or death.

## CHAPTER V.

## LIES FALSELY CALLED LIES OF BENEVOLENCE.

THESE are lies which are occasioned by a selfish dread of losing favor, and provoking displeasure, by speaking the truth, rather than by real benevolence. Persons, calling themselves benevolent, withhold disagreeable truths, and utter agreeable falsehoods, from a wish to give pleasure, or to avoid giving pain. If you say that you are looking ill, they tell you that you are looking well. If you express a fear that you are growing corpulent, they say you are only just as fat as you ought to be. If you are hoarse in singing, and painfully conscious of it, they declare that they did not perceive it. And this not from the desire of flattering you, or from the malignant one of wishing to render you ridiculous, by imposing on your credulity, but from the desire of making you pleased with yourself. In short, they lay it down as a rule, that you must never scruple to sacrifice the truth, when the alternative is giving the slightest pain or mortification to any one.

I shall leave my readers to decide whether the lies of fear or of benevolence preponderate in the following trifling but characteristic anecdote.

## A TALE OF POTTED SPRATS.

MOST mistresses of families have a family recipe-book ; and are apt to believe that no recipes are so good as their own.

With one of these notable ladies a young house-keeper went to pass a few days, both at her town and country-house. The hostess was skilled, not only in culinary lore, but in economy ; and was in the habit of setting on her table, even when not alone, whatever her taste or carefulness had led her to pot, pickle, or preserve, for occasional use.

Before a meagre family dinner was quite over, a dish of POTTED SPRATS was set before the lady of the house, who, expatiating on their excellence, derived from a family recipe of a century old, pressed her still unsatisfied guest to partake of them.

The dish was as good as much salt and little spice could make it ; but it had one peculiarity—it had a strong flavor of garlic, and to garlic the poor guest had a great dislike.

But she was a timid woman ; and good-breeding, and what she called benevolence, said, “ Persevere a swallow,” though her palate said, “ No.” “ Is it not excellent ?” said the hostess. “ Very,” faltered out the half-suffocated guest ; and this was lie the first. “ Did you ever eat any thing like it before ?” “ Never,” replied the other, more firmly ; for *then* she knew that she spoke the truth, and *longing* to add, “ And I hope

I never shall eat any thing like it again." "I will give you the recipe," said the lady, kindly: "it will be of use to you as a young house-keeper; for it is economical, as well as good, and serves to make out, when we have a scrap-dinner. My servants often dine on it." "I wonder you can get any servants to live with you," thought the guest; "but I dare say you do not get any one to stay long!" "You do not, however, *eat* as if you liked it." "O yes, *indeed*, I do, very much," (lie the second,) she replied; "but you forget I have already eaten a *good dinner*:" (lie the third. Alas! what had benevolence, *so called*, to answer for on this occasion!)

"Well, I am delighted to find that you like my sprats," said the flattered hostess, while the cloth was removing: adding, "John! do not let those sprats be eaten in the kitchen!" an order which the guest heard with indescribable alarm.

The next day they were to set off for the country-house, or cottage. When they were seated in the carriage, a large box was put in, and the guest fancied she smelt *garlic*; but

——"where ignorance is bliss,  
'Tis folly to be wise."

She therefore asked no questions; but tried to enjoy the present, regardless of the future. At a certain distance they stopped to bait the horses. There the guest expected that they should get out, and take some refreshment; but her economical companion, with a shrewd wink of the eye, observed, "I always sit in the carriage on these oc-



casions. If one gets out, the people at the inn expect one to order a luncheon. I therefore take mine with me." So saying, John was summoned to drag the carriage out of sight of the inn windows. He then unpacked the box, took out of it knives and forks, plates, etc., and also a *jar*, which, impregnating the air with its effluvia, even before it was opened, disclosed to the alarmed guest that its contents were the dreaded sprats!

"Alas!" thought she, "Pandora's box was nothing to this! for in that, Hope remained behind; but at the bottom of this is Despair!" In vain did the unhappy lady declare (lie the fourth) that "she had no appetite, and (lie the fifth) that she never ate in the morning." Her hostess would take no denial. However, she contrived to get a piece of sprat down, enveloped in bread; and the rest she threw out of the window, when her companion was looking another way—who, on turning round, exclaimed, "So you have soon dispatched the fish! let me give you another: do not refuse because you think they are nearly finished: I assure you there are several left; and (delightful information!) we shall have a fresh supply to-morrow!" However, this time she was allowed to know when she had eaten enough; and the travellers proceeded to their journey's end.

This day the sprats did not appear at dinner; but there being only a few left, they were kept for a *bonne bouche*, and reserved for supper! a meal of which, this evening, on account of indisposition, the hostess did not partake, and was therefore

at liberty to attend entirely to the wants of her guest, who would fain have declined eating also, but it was impossible: she had just declared that she was quite well, and had often owned that she enjoyed a piece of supper after an *early dinner*. There was therefore no retreat from the maze in which her insincerity had involved her, and eat she must; but when she again smelt on her plate the nauseous composition, which being near the bottom of the pot was more disagreeable than ever, human patience and human infirmity could bear no more: the scarcely tasted morsel fell from her lips, and she rushed precipitately into the open air, almost disposed to execrate, in her heart, potted sprats, the good-breeding of her officious hostess, and even Benevolence itself.

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Some may observe on reading this story, "What a foolish creature the guest must have been! and how improbable it is that any one should scruple to say the dish is disagreeable, and I hate garlic!" But it is my conviction that the guest, on this occasion, exhibited only a slightly exaggerated specimen of the usual conduct of those who have been taught to conduct themselves wholly by the artificial rules of civilized society, of which, generally speaking, falsehood is the basis.

Benevolence is certainly one of the first of virtues; and its result is an amiable aversion to wound the feelings of others, even in trifles; therefore be-

nevolence and politeness may be considered as the same thing; but WORLDLY POLITENESS is only a *copy* of benevolence. Benevolence is gold: this politeness is a paper currency, contrived as its *substitute*: as society, being aware that benevolence is as rare as it is precious, and that few are able to distinguish, in any thing, the false from the true, resolved, in lieu of benevolence, to receive WORLDLY POLITENESS, with all her train of deceitful welcomes, heartless regrets, false approbations, and treacherous smiles—those alluring seemings, which shine around her brow, and enable her to pass for BENEVOLENCE herself.

But how must the religious and the moral dislike the one, though they venerate the other! The kindness of the worldly polite only lives its little hour in one's presence; but that of the benevolent retains its life and sweetness in one's absence. The worldly polite will often make the objects of their greatest flatteries and attentions, when present, the butt of their ridicule as soon as they see them no more: while the benevolent hold the characters and qualities of their associates in a sort of *holy keeping* at all times, and are as *indulgent* to the *absent* as they were *attentive* to the *present*. The kindness of the worldly polite is the gay and pleasing flower worn in the bosom, as the ornament of a few hours; then suffered to fade, and thrown by when it is wanted no longer; but that of the really benevolent is like the fresh-springing evergreen, which blooms on through all times, and all seasons, unfading in beauty, and

undiminishing in sweetness. But it may be asked, whether I do not admit that the principle of never wounding the self-love or feelings of any one is a benevolent principle; and whether it be not commendable to act on it continually. Certainly; if sincerity goes hand in hand with benevolence. But where is your benevolence, if you praise those to their faces whom you abuse as soon as they have left you? where your benevolence, if you welcome those, with smiling urbanity, whom you see drive off with a "Well, I am glad they are gone?" And how common is it to hear persons who think themselves very moral, and very kind, begin, as soon as their guests are departed, and even when they are scarcely out of hearing, to criticise their dress, their manners, and their characters: while the poor unconscious visitors, the dupes of their deceitful courtesy, are going home delighted with their visit, and saying what a charming evening they have passed, and what agreeable and kind-hearted persons the master and mistress of the house and their family are! Surely, then, I am not refining too much when I assert that the cordial seemings which these deluded guests were received, treated, and parted with, were any thing rather than LIES OF BENEVOLENCE. I also believe that those who scruple not, even from well-intentioned kindness, to utter spontaneous falsehoods, are not gifted with much judgment and real feeling, nor are they given to think deeply; for the virtues are nearly related, and live in the greatest harmony with each other:

consequently, sincerity and benevolence must always agree, and not, as is often supposed, be at variance with each other. The truly benevolent feel and cultivate such candid and kind views of those who associate with them, that *they* need not *fear* to be sincere in *their* answers; and if obliged to speak an unwelcome truth, or an unwelcome opinion, their well-principled kindness teaches them some way of making what they utter palatable; and benevolence is gratified without injury to sincerity.

It is a common assertion, that society is so constituted that it is impossible to tell the truth *always*; but if those who possess good sense would use it as zealously to remove obstacles in the way of spontaneous truth as they do to justify themselves in the practice of falsehood, the difficulty would vanish. Besides, truth is so uncommon an ingredient in society, that few are acquainted with it sufficiently to know whether it be admissible or not. A pious and highly gifted man said, in my presence, to a friend whom I esteem and admire, and who had asserted that truth cannot always be told in society, "Has any one tried it? We have all of us, in the course of our lives, seen dead birds of Paradise so often, that we should scarcely take the trouble of going to see one now. But the Marquis of Hastings has brought over a *living* bird of Paradise; and every one is eagerly endeavoring to procure a sight of *that*. I therefore prognosticate that, were spontaneous truth to be told in society, where it now is rarely, if ever, heard, *real, living truth* would

be as much sought after, and admired, as the living bird of Paradise."\*

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The following anecdote exhibits that lie which some may call the lie of benevolence, and others, the lie of *fear*: that is, the dread of losing favor, by wounding a person's self-love. I myself denominate it the latter.

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#### AN AUTHORESS AND HER AUDITORS.

A YOUNG lady, who valued herself on her benevolence and good-breeding, and had as much respect for truth as those who live in the world usually have, was invited by an authoress, whose favor she coveted, and by whose attention she was flattered, to come and hear her read a manuscript tragi-comedy. The other auditor was an old lady, who, to considerable personal ugliness, united strange grimaces, and convulsive twitchings of the face, chiefly the result of physical causes.

The authoress read in so affected and dramatic a manner, that the young lady's boasted benevolence had no power to curb her propensity to

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\* I fear that I have given the words weakly and imperfectly; but I know that I am correct as to the sentiment and the illustration. The speaker was EDWARD IRVING.



laughter; which being perceived by the reader, she stopped in angry consternation, and desired to know whether she laughed at her, or her composition. At first she was too much fluttered to make any reply; but as she dared not own the truth, and had no scruple against being guilty of deception, she cleverly resolved to excuse herself by a practical lie. She therefore trod on her friend's foot, elbowed her, and, by winks and signs, tried to make her believe that it was the grimaces of her opposite neighbor, who was quietly knitting and twitching as usual, which had had such an effect on her risible faculties; and the deceived authoress, smiling herself when her young guest directed her eye to her unconscious *vis-a-vis*, resumed her reading with a lightened brow and increased energy.

This added to the young lady's amusement, as she could now indulge her risibility occasionally at the authoress's expense, without exciting her suspicions: especially as the manuscript was sometimes intended to excite smiles, if not laughter; and the self-love of the writer led her to suppose that her hearer's mirth was the result of her comic powers. But the treacherous gratification of the auditor was soon at an end. The manuscript was meant to move tears as well as smiles; but as the matter became more pathetic, the manner became more ludicrous; and the youthful hearer could no more force a tear than she could restrain a laugh, till the mortified authoress, irritated into forgetfulness of all feeling and propriety, exclaimed, "Indeed, Mrs. —, I

must desire you to move your seat, and sit where Miss —— does not see you; for you make such queer grimaces that you draw her attention, and cause her to laugh when she should be listening to me.” The erring but humane girl was overwhelmed with dismay at the unexpected exposure; and when the poor infirm old lady replied, in a faltering tone, “Is she indeed laughing at me?” she could scarcely refrain from telling the truth, and assuring her that she was incapable of such cruelty. “Yes,” rejoined the authoress, in a paroxysm of wounded self-love, “she owed to me, soon after she began, that you occasioned her ill-timed mirth; and when I looked at you I could hardly help smiling myself; but I am sure you could help making such faces if you would.” “Child!” cried the old lady, while tears of wounded sensibility trickled down her pale cheeks, “and you, my unjust friend, I hope and trust that I forgive you both; but if ever you should be paralytic yourselves, may you remember this evening, and learn to repent of having been provoked to laugh by the physical weakness of a palsied old woman!” The indignant authoress was now penitent, subdued, and ashamed, and earnestly asked pardon for her unkindness; but the young offender, whose acted lie had exposed her to seem guilty of a fault which she had not committed, was in an agony to which expression was inadequate. But to exculpate herself was impossible; and she could only give her wounded victim tear for tear.

To attend to a further perusal of the manu-

script was impossible. The old lady desired that her carriage should come round directly: the authoress locked up her composition, that had been so ill received; and the young lady, who had been proud of the acquaintance of each, became an object of suspicion and dislike both to the one and the other; since the former considered her to be of a cruel and unfeeling nature, and the latter could not conceal from herself the mortifying truth, that her play must be wholly devoid of interest, as it had utterly failed either to rivet or attract her young auditor's attention.

But though this girl lost two valued acquaintances by acting a lie, (a harmless white lie, as it is called,) I fear she was not taught or amended by the circumstance; but deplored her want of luck, rather than her want of integrity; and had her deception met with the success which she expected, she would probably have boasted of her ingenious artifice to her acquaintance. Nor can I help believing that she goes on in the same way whenever she is tempted to do so, and values herself on the lies of SELFISH FEAR, which she dignifies by the name of LIES OF BENEVOLENCE.

It is curious to observe that the kindness which prompts to really erroneous conduct cannot continue to bear even a remote connection with real benevolence. The mistaken girl, in the anecdote related above, begins with what she calls a virtuous deception. She could not wound the feelings of the authoress by owning that she laughed at her mode of reading: she therefore accused herself of a much worse fault, that of

laughing at the personal infirmities of a fellow-creature; and then, finding that her artifice enabled her to indulge her sense of the ridiculous with impunity, she at length laughs treacherously and systematically, because she dares do so, and not *involuntarily*, as she did at first, at her unsuspecting friend. Thus such hollow, unprincipled benevolence as hers soon degenerated into absolute *malevolence*. But had this girl been a girl of principle and of *real benevolence*, she might have healed her friend's vanity at the same time that she wounded it, by saying, after she had owned that her mode of reading made her laugh, that she was now convinced of the truth of what she had often heard, namely, that authors rarely do justice to their own works when they read them aloud themselves, however well they may read the works of others; because they are naturally so nervous on the occasion, that they are laughably violent, because painfully agitated.

This reply could not have offended her friend greatly, if at all; and it might have led her to moderate her *outré* manner of reading. She would in consequence have appeared to more advantage; and the interests of real benevolence, namely, the doing good to a fellow-creature, would have been served, and she would not, by a vain attempt to save a friend's vanity from being hurt, have been the means of wounding the feelings of an afflicted *woman*; have incurred the charge of inhumanity, which she by no means deserved; and have vainly, as well as grossly, sacrificed the interests of truth.

## CHAPTER VI.

## LIES OF CONVENIENCE.

I HAVE now before me a very copious subject; and shall begin by that most common *lie of convenience*, the order to servants to say "Not at home;" a custom which even some moralists defend, because they say that it is not lying, as it deceives no one. But this I deny; as I know it is after *meant* to deceive. I know that if the person, angry at being refused admittance, says, at the next meeting with the denied person, "I am sure you *were* at home such a day, when I called, but did not *choose to see me*," the answer is, "O dear, no: how can you say so? I am *sure* I was not at home; for I am never *denied to you*;" though the speaker is conscious all the while that "not at home" was intended to *deceive*, as well as to deny. But if it be true that "not at home" is not intended to deceive, and is a form used merely to exclude visitors with as little trouble as possible, I would ask whether it were not just as easy to say, "My master, or my mistress, is engaged, and can see no one this morning." Why have recourse even to the appearance of falsehood, when truth would answer every purpose just as well?

But if "not at home" be understood amongst *equals*, merely as a legitimate excuse, it still is highly objectionable; because it must have a most pernicious effect on the minds of *servants*,



who cannot be supposed parties to this implied compact amongst their superiors, and must therefore understand the order *literally*; which is, "Go, and lie for my convenience!" How then, I ask, in the name of justice and common sense, can I, after giving such an order, resent any lie which servants may choose to tell me for their own convenience, pleasure, or interest?

Thoughtless and injudicious—I do not like to add, *unprincipled*—persons, sometimes say to servants, when they have denied their mistress, "O fie! how can you tell me such a fib without blushing? I am ashamed of you! You know your lady is at home. Well: I am really *shocked* at your having so much effrontery as to tell such a lie with so grave a face! But give my compliments to your mistress, and tell her I hope that she will see me the next time I call;"—and all this uttered in a laughing manner, as if this moral degradation of the poor servant were an *excellent joke*! But on these occasions, what can the effect of such joking be on the conscious liars? It must either lead them to think as lightly of truth as their reprovers themselves, (since they seem more amused than shocked at the detected violation of it,) or they will turn away distressed in conscience, degraded in their own eyes for having obeyed their employer, and feeling a degree of virtuous indignation against those persons who have, by their immoral command, been the means of their painful degradation; nay, their master and mistress will be for ever lowered in their servant's esteem: they will feel that the *teacher* of



a lie is brought down on a level with the utterer of it; and the chances are that, during the rest of their service, they will without scruple use *against their employers* the dexterity which they have taught them to use *against others*.\*

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\* As I feel a great desire to lay before my readers the strongest arguments possible to prove the vicious tendency of even the most tolerated lie of convenience; namely, the order to servants to say, "Not at home;" and as I wholly distrust my own powers of arguing with *effect* on this or any other subject, I give the following extracts from Dr. Chalmers's "Discourses on the Application of Christianity to the Commercial and Ordinary Affairs of Life:" discourses which abundantly and eloquently prove the sinfulness of deceit in general, and the fearful responsibility incurred by all who depart, even in the most common occurrences, from that undeviating practice of truth which is everywhere enjoined on Christians in the pages of holy writ. But I shall, though reluctantly, confine myself in these extracts to what bears immediately on the subject before us. I must however state, in justice to myself, that my remarks *on the same* points were not only written, but printed and published, in a periodical work, before I knew that Dr. Chalmers had written the book in question:—

"You put a lie into the mouth of a dependent, and that for the purpose of protecting your time from such an encroachment as you would not feel to be convenient or agreeable. Look to the little account that is made of a brother's and sister's eternity. Behold the guilty task that is thus unmercifully laid upon one who is shortly to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. Think of the entanglement that is thus made to beset the path of a creature who is imperishable. That at the shrine of Mammon such a bloody sacrifice should be rendered, by some of his unrelenting votaries,

But amongst the most frequent lies of convenience are those which are told relative to engagements, which they who make them are averse to keep. "Headaches, bad colds, unexpected visitors from the country"—all these, in their turn,

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is not to be wondered at; but that the shrine of elegance and fashion should be bathed in blood—that *soft and sentimental ladyship* should put forth her hand to such an enormity—that she who can sigh so gently, and shed her graceful tear over the sufferings of others, should thus be accessory to the second and more awful death of her own domestics—that one who looks the mildest and loveliest of human beings, should exact obedience to a mandate which carries wrath, and tribulation, and anguish in its train—O! how it should confirm every Christian in his defiance of the authority of fashion, and lead him to spurn at all its folly and all its worthlessness! And it is quite in vain to say that the servant, whom you thus employ as the deputy of your falsehood, can possibly execute the commission without the conscience being at all tainted or defiled by it; that a simple cottage maid can so sophisticate the matter, as, without any violence to her original principles, to utter the language of what she assuredly knows to be a downright lie—that she, humble and untutored soul! can sustain no injury, when thus made to tamper with the plain English of these realms—that she can at all satisfy herself how, by the prescribed utterance of "not at home," she is not pronouncing such words as are substantially untrue, but merely using them in another and perfectly understood meaning, and which, according to their modern translation, denote that the person, of whom she is thus speaking, is securely lurking in one of the most secure and intimate of its receptacles.

"You may try to darken this piece of casuistry as you will, and work up your minds into the peaceable

are used as lies of convenience, and gratify indolence, or caprice, at the expense of integrity.

How often have I pitied the wives and daughters of professional men, for the number of lies which they are obliged to tell in the course of the

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conviction that it is all right, and as it should be. But be very certain that, where the moral sense of your domestic is not already overthrown, there is, at least, one bosom within which you have raised a war of doubts and difficulties, and where, if the victory be on your side, it will be on the side of him who is the great enemy of righteousness.

“There is, at least, one person, along the line of this conveyance of deceit, who condemneth herself in that which she alloweth; who, in the language of Paul, esteeming the practice to be unclean, to her will it be unclean; who will perform her task with the offence of her own conscience, and to whom, therefore, it will indeed be evil; who cannot render obedience in this matter to her earthly superior, but by an act in which she does not stand clear and unconscious of guilt before God; and with whom, therefore, the sad consequence of what we can call nothing else than a barbarous combination against the principles and prospects of the lower orders, is, that, as she has not cleaved fully unto the Lord, and has not kept by the service of the one Master, and has not forsaken all but his bidding, she cannot be the disciple of Christ.

“And let us just ask a master or a mistress, who can thus make free with the moral principle of their servants in one instance, how they can look for pure or correct principle from them in other instances? What right have they to complain of unfaithfulness against themselves, who have deliberately seduced another into a habit of unfaithfulness against God? Are they so utterly unskilled in the mysteries of our nature, as not to perceive that the servant whom you have taught to

year! “Dr. —— is very sorry; but he was sent for to a patient just as he was coming with me to your house.” “Papa’s compliments, and he is very sorry; but he was forced to attend a commission of bankruptcy; but will certainly come, if he can, by-and-by;” when the chances are that the physician is enjoying himself over his book

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lie, has gotten such rudiments of education at your hand, as that, without any further help, he can now teach himself to purloin?—and yet nothing more frequent than loud and angry complainings against treachery of servants; as if, in the general wreck of their other principles, a principle of consideration for the good and interest of their employer, and who has at the same time been their seducer, was to survive in all its power and sensibility. It was just such a retribution as was to be looked for. It is a recoil upon their own heads, of the mischief which they themselves have originated. It is the temporal part of the punishment which they have to bear for the sin of our text; but not the whole of it: far better for them both that both person and property were cast into the sea, than that they should stand the reckoning of that day, when called to give an account of the souls that they have murdered, and the blood of so mighty a destruction is required at their hands.”

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These remarks at first made part of a chapter on the lie of convenience, but thinking them not suited to that *period* of my work, I took them out again, and not being able to introduce them in any subsequent chapter, because they treat of one particular lie, and not of lying in general, I have been obliged to content myself with putting them in a note.

and his fire, and the lawyer also, congratulating themselves on having escaped that terrible bore, a party, at the expense of teaching their wife, or daughter, or son, to tell what they call a white lie! But I would ask those fathers, and those mothers, who make their children the bearers of similar excuses, whether, after giving them such commissions, they could conscientiously resent any breach of veracity, or breach of confidence, or deception, committed by their children in matters of more importance? "*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute,*" says the proverb; and I believe that habitual, permitted, and encouraged lying, in little and seemingly unimportant things, leads to want of truth and principle in great and serious matters; for when the barrier, or restrictive principle, is once thrown down, no one can say where a stop will be put to the inroads and the destruction.

I forgot, in the first edition of my work, to notice one falsehood which is only too often uttered by young women in a ball-room; but I shall now mention it with due reprehension, though I scarcely know under what head to class it. I think, however, that it may be named without impropriety, one of the LIES OF CONVENIENCE.

But I cannot do better than give an extract on this subject, from a letter addressed to me by a friend, on reading this book, in which she has had the kindness to praise, and the still greater kindness to admonish me.\* She says as follows :

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\* Vide a (printed) letter addressed "to Mrs. Opie,

“One falsehood that is very often uttered by the lips of youth, I trust not without a blush, you have passed unnoticed; and, as I always considered it no venial one, I will take the present opportunity of pointing out its impropriety. A young lady, when asked by a gentleman to dance whom she does not approve, will, without hesitation, say, though unprovided with any other partner, “If I dance I am engaged.” This positive untruth is calculated to wound the feelings of the person to whom it is addressed, for it generally happens that such person discovers he has been deceived, as well as rejected. It is very seldom that young men to whom it would really be improper that a young lady should give her hand for the short time occupied in one or two dances, are admitted into our public places; but in such a case, could not a reference be made by her to any friends who are present? Pride and vanity too often prompt the refusal, and, because the offered partner has not sufficiently sacrificed to the graces, is little versed ‘in the poetry of motion,’ or derives no consequence from the possession of rank or riches, he is treated with what he must feel to be contempt. True politeness, which has its seat in the heart, would scorn thus to wound another, and the real votaries of sincerity would never so

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with observations on her recent publication, ‘Illustrations of Lying in all its branches.’” The authoress is Susan Reeve, wife of Dr. Reeve, M. D., and daughter of E. Bonhote, of Bungay, authoress of many interesting publications.



violate its rules to escape a temporary mortification."

I shall only add, that I have entire *unity of sentiment* with the foregoing extract.\*

Here I beg leave to insert a short tale, illustrative of *Lies of Convenience*.

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### PROJECTS DEFEATED.

THERE are a great many match-makers in the world: beings who dare to take on themselves the *fearful responsibility* of bringing two persons together into that solemn union which only death or guilt can dissolve; and thus make themselves answerable for the possible misery of two of their fellow-creatures.

One of these busy match-makers, a gentleman named Byrome, was very desirous that Henry Sandford, a relation of his, should become a married man; and he called one morning to inform him that he had at length met with a young lady who would, he flattered himself, suit him in all respects as a wife. Henry Sandford was not a man of many words; nor had he a high opinion of Byrome's judgment. He therefore only said, in reply, that he was willing to accompany his relation to the lady's house, where, on Byrome's

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\* Young ladies have no business in such scenes of temptation.—[EDITOR

invitation, he found that he was expected to drink tea.

The young lady in question, whom I shall call Lydia L——, lived with her widowed aunt, who had brought her and her sisters up, and supplied to them the place of parents, lost in their infancy. She had bestowed on them an expensive and showy education: had, both by precept and example, given every worldly polish to their manners; and had taught them to set off their beauty by tasteful and fashionable dress; that is, she had done for them all that she thought was necessary to be done; and she, as well as Byrome, believed that they possessed every requisite to make the marriage state happy.

But Henry Sandford was not so easy to please. He valued personal beauty and external accomplishments far below Christian graces and moral virtues; and was resolved never to unite himself to a woman whose conduct was not entirely under the guidance of a strict religious principle.

Lydia L—— was not in the room when Sandford arrived, but he very soon had cause to doubt the moral integrity of her aunt and sisters; for, on Byrome's saying, "I hope you are not to have any company but ourselves to-day," the aunt replied, "O no: we put off some company that we expected, because we thought you would like to be alone." And one of the sisters added, "Yes; I wrote to the disagreeable D——s, informing them that my aunt was too unwell, with one of her bad headaches, to see company." "And I," said the other, "called on the G——s,

and said that we wished them to come another day, because the beaux whom they liked best to meet were engaged." "Admirable!" cried Byrome, "let women alone for excuses!" while Sandford looked grave, and wondered how any one could think admirable what to *him* appeared so reprehensible. "However," thought he, "*Lydia* had no share in this treachery and white lying, but may dislike them, as I do." Soon after she made her appearance, attired for conquest; and so radiant did she seem in her youthful loveliness and grace, that Sandford earnestly hoped she had better principles than her sisters.

Time fled on rapid wings; and Byrome and the two elder sisters frequently congratulated each other that "the disagreeable D——s and tiresome G——s" had not been allowed to come and destroy, as they would have done, the pleasure of the afternoon. But Lydia did not join in this conversation; and Sandford was glad of it. The hours passed in alternate music and conversation, and also in looking over some beautiful drawings of Lydia's; but the evening was to conclude with a French game, a *jeu-de-societe* which Sandford was unacquainted with, and which would give Lydia an opportunity of telling a story gracefully.

The L——s lived in a pleasant village near the town where Sandford and Byrome resided; and a long avenue of fine trees led to their door; when, just as the aunt was pointing out their beauty to Sandford, she exclaimed, "O dear, girls, what shall we do? There is Mrs. Carthew now

entering the avenue! Not at home, John! not at home!" she eagerly vociferated. "My dear aunt, that will not do for her," cried the eldest sister; "for she will ask for us all in turn, and inquire where we are, that she may go after us." "True," said the other, "and if we admit her, she is so severe and methodistical, that she will spoil all our enjoyment." "However, in she must come," observed the aunt; "for as she is an old friend, I should not like to affront her."

Sandford was just going to say, "If she be an old friend, admit her, by all means;" when on looking at Lydia, who had been silent all this time, and was, he flattered himself, of his way of thinking, he saw her put her finger archly to her nose, and heard her exclaim, "I have it! There, there; go all of you into the next room, and close the door!" She then bounded gracefully down the avenue; while Sandford, with a degree of pain which he could have scarcely thought possible, heard one of the sisters say to Byrome, "Ah! Lydia is to be trusted: she tells a white lie with such an innocent look, that no one can suspect her." "What a valuable accomplishment," thought Sandford, "in a woman! what a recommendation in a wife!" and he really dreaded the fair deceiver's return.

She came back, "nothing doubting," and, smiling with great self-complacency, said, "It was very fortunate that it was I who met her; for I have more presence of mind than you, my dear sisters. The good soul had seen the D——s; and hearing my aunt was ill, came to inquire

concerning her. She was even coming on to the house, as she saw no reason why she should not; and I, for a moment, was at a loss how to keep her away, when I luckily recollected her great dread of infection, and told her that, as the typhus fever was in the village, I feared it was only too possible that my poor aunt had caught it!" "Capital!" cried the aunt and Byrome. "Really, Lydia, that was even outdoing yourself," cried her eldest sister. "Poor Carthew! I should not wonder, if she came at all near the house, that she went home, and took to her bed from alarm!"

Even Byrome was shocked at this unfeeling speech; and could not help observing, that it would be hard indeed if such was the result, to a good old friend, of an affectionate inquiry. "True," replied Lydia, "and I hope and trust she will not really suffer; but, though very good, she is very troublesome; and could we but keep up the 'hum' for a day or two, it would be such a comfort to us! as she comes very often, and now cannot endure cards, or any music but hymn-singing."

"Then I am glad she was not admitted," said Byrome, who saw with pain, by Sandford's folded arms and grave countenance, that a change in his feelings towards Lydia had taken place. Nor was he deceived: Sandford was indeed gazing intently, but not, as before, with almost overpowering admiration, on the consciously blushing object of it. No: he was likening her, as he gazed, to the beautiful apples that are said to grow on

the shores of the Dead Sea, which tempt the traveller to pluck and eat, but are filled only with dust and bitter ashes. "But we are losing time," said Lydia: "let us begin our French game!" Sandford coldly bowed assent; but he knew not what she said: he was so inattentive, that he had to forfeit continually: he spoke not; he smiled not, except with a sort of sarcastic expression; and Lydia felt conscious that she had *lost him*, though she knew not why; for her moral sense was too dull for her to conceive the effect which her falsehood and want of feeling towards an old and pious friend had produced on him. This consciousness was a painful one, as Sandford was handsome, sensible, and rich; therefore he was what match-seeking girls (odious vulgarity!) call *a good catch*. Besides, Byrome had told her that she might depend on making a conquest of his relation, Henry Sandford. The evening, therefore, which began so brightly, ended in pain and mortification, both to Sandford and Lydia. The former was impatient to depart as soon as supper was over, and the latter, piqued, disappointed, and almost dejected, did not join her sisters in soliciting him to stay.

"Well," said Byrome, as soon as they left the house, "how do you like the beautiful and accomplished Lydia?" "She is beautiful and accomplished, but that is all." "Nay, I am sure you seemed to admire her exceedingly, till just now, and paid her more animated attention than I ever saw you pay any woman before." "True; but I soon found that she was as hollow-hearted as



she is fair." "O! I suppose you mean the deception which she practiced on the old lady. Well: where was the great harm of that? She only told a white lie; and nobody, that is not a puritan, scruples to do that, you know."

"I am no puritan, as you term it; yet I scruple to do it; but if I were to be betrayed into such meanness, (and no one perhaps can be always on his guard,) I should blush to have it known; but this girl seemed to glory in her shame, and to be proud of the disgraceful readiness with which she uttered her falsehood." "I must own that I was surprised she did not express some regret at being forced to do what she did, in order to prevent our pleasure from being spoiled." "Why should she? Like yourself, she saw no harm in a *white lie*; but, mark me, Byrome, the woman whom I marry shall not think there is such a thing as a *white lie*: she shall think all lies *black*; because the intention of *all* lies is to *deceive*; and, from the highest authority, we are forbidden to deceive one another. I assure you, that if I were married to Lydia, I should distrust her expressions of love toward me: I should suspect that she married my fortune, not me; and that, whenever strong temptation offered, she would deceive me as readily as, for a very slight one indeed, she deceived that kind friend who came on an errand of love, and was sent away alarmed and anxious, by this young hypocrite's unblushing falsehood! Trust me, Byrome, that my wife shall be a strict moralist." "What! a moral philosopher?" "No: a far better thing. She shall be an *humble, rely-*

*ing Christian* : thence she will be capable of speaking the truth, even to her own condemnation ; and, on all occasions, her fear of man will be wholly subservient to her fear of her Creator."

"And, pray, how can you ever be able to assure yourself that any girl is this paragon?" "Surely, if what we call chance could so easily exhibit to me Lydia, in all the ugliness of her falsehood, it may equally, one day or other, disclose to me some other girl in all the beauty of her truth. Till then, I hope, I shall have resolution enough to remain a bachelor." "Then," replied Byrome, shaking his head, "I must bid you good night, an old bachelor in prospect and in perpetuity !" And as he returned his farewell, Sandford sighed to think that his prophecy was only too likely to be fulfilled ; since his observation had convinced him that a strict adherence to truth, on little as well as on great occasions, is, though one of the most IMPORTANT, the RAREST of all virtues.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### ON LIES OF INTEREST.

THESE lies are very various, and are more excusable, and less offensive, than many others.

The pale, ragged beggar, who, to add to the effect of his or her ill looks, tells of the large family which does not exist, has a strong motive to deceive in the penury which does ; and one

cannot consider as a very *abandoned* liar, the tradesman who tells you he cannot afford to come down to the price which you offer, because he gave almost as much for the goods himself. It is not from persons like these that we meet with the most disgusting marks of interested falsehood. It is when habitual and petty lying profanes the lips of those whom independence preserves from any strong temptation to violate truth, and whom religion and education might have taught to value it.

The following story will illustrate the LIES OF INTEREST.

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### THE SCREEN; OR, "NOT AT HOME."

THE widow of Governor Atherling returned from the East Indies, old, rich, and childless; and as she had none but very distant relations, her affections naturally turned toward the earliest friends of her youth; one of whom she found still living, and residing in a large country town.

She therefore hired a house and grounds adjacent, in a village very near to that lady's abode, and became not only her frequent but welcome guest. This old friend was a widow in narrow circumstances, with four daughters slenderly provided for; and she justly concluded that, if she and her family could endear themselves to their opulent guest, they should in all probability inherit some of her property. In the meanwhile, as she never visited them without bringing with

her, in great abundance, whatever was wanted for the table, and might therefore be said to contribute to their maintenance, without seeming to intend to do so, they took incessant pains to conciliate her more and more every day, by flatteries which she did not see through, and attentions which she deeply felt. Still, the Livingstones were not in spirit united to their amiable guest. The sorrows of her heart had led her, by slow degrees, to seek refuge in a religious course of life; and, spite of her proneness to self-deception, she could not conceal from herself that, on this most important subject, the Livingstones had never thought seriously, and were, as yet, entirely women of the world. But still her heart longed to be attached to something; and as her starved affections craved some daily food, she suffered herself to love this plausible, amusing, agreeable, and seemingly affectionate family; and she every day lived in hope that, by her precepts and example, she should ultimately tear them from that "world they loved too well." Sweet and precious to their own souls are the illusions of the good; and the deceived East-Indian was happy, because she did not understand the true nature of the Livingstones.

On the contrary, so fascinated was she by what she fancied they were, or might become, that she took very little notice of a shamefaced, awkward, retiring, silent girl, the only child of the dearest friend that her childhood and her youth had known, and who had been purposely introduced to her *only* as *Fanny Barnwell*. For the Liv-

ingstones were too selfish, and too prudent, to let their rich friend know that this poor girl was the orphan of *Fanny Beaumont*. *Withholding*, therefore, the most *important part of the truth*, they only informed her that Fanny Barnwell was an orphan, who was glad to live amongst her friends, that she might make her small income sufficient for her wants; taking care not to add that she was mistaken in supposing that Fanny Beaumont, whose long silence and subsequent death she had bitterly deplored, had died childless; for that she had married a second husband, by whom she had the poor orphan in question, and had lived many years in sorrow and obscurity, the result of this imprudent marriage; resolving, however, in order to avoid accidents, that Fanny's visit should not be of long duration. In the meanwhile, they confided in the security afforded them by what may be called their *PASSIVE LIE OF INTEREST*. But, in order to make "assurance doubly sure," they had also recourse to the *ACTIVE LIE OF INTEREST*; and, in order to frighten Fanny from ever daring to inform their visitor that she was the child of Fanny Beaumont, they assured her that that lady was so enraged against her poor mother, for having married her unworthy father, that no one dared to mention her name to her; because it never failed to draw from her the most violent abuse of her once dearest friend. "And you know, Fanny," they took care to add, "that you could not bear to hear your poor mother abused." "No: that I could not, indeed," was the weeping girl's answer; the Livingstones therefore felt

safe and satisfied. However, it still might not be amiss to make the old lady dislike Fanny, if they could; and they contrived to render the poor girl's virtue the means of doing her injury.

Fanny's mother could not bequeathe much money to her child; but she had endeavored to enrich her with principles and piety. Above all, she had impressed her with the strictest regard for truth; and the Livingstones artfully contrived to make her integrity the means of displeasing their East-Indian friend.

This good old lady's chief failing was believing implicitly whatever was said in her commendation: not that she loved flattery, but that she liked to believe she had conciliated *good-will*; and being sincere *herself*, she never thought of distrusting the sincerity of *others*.

Nor was she at all vain of her once fine person, and finer face, or improperly fond of dress. Still, from an almost pitiable degree of *bonhomie*, she allowed the Livingstones to dress her as they liked; and, as they chose to make her wear fashionable and young-looking attire, in which they declared she looked "*so handsome! and so well!*" she believed they were the best judges of what was proper for her, and always replied, "Well, dear friends, it is entirely a matter of indifference to me; so dress me as you please;" while the Livingstones, not *believing* that it was a *matter of indifference*, used to laugh, as soon as she was gone, at her obvious credulity.

But this ungenerous and treacherous conduct excited such strong indignation in the usually



gentle Fanny, that she could not help expressing her sentiments concerning it; and by that means made them the more eager to betray her into offending their unsuspecting friend. They therefore asked Fanny, in her presence, one day, whether their dear guest did not dress *most becomingly*?

The poor girl made sundry sheepish and awkward contortions, now looking down, and then looking up—unable to lie, yet afraid to tell the truth. “Why do you not reply, Fanny?” said the artful questioner. “Is she not well dressed?” “Not in *my* opinion,” faltered out the distressed girl. “And, pray, Miss Barnwell,” said the old lady, “what part of my dress do you disapprove?” After a pause, Fanny took courage to reply, “All of it, madam.” “Why? do you think it too young for me?” “I do.” “A plain-spoken young person, that!” she observed, in a tone of pique; while the Livingstones exclaimed, “Impertinent! ridiculous!” and Fanny was glad to leave the room, feeling excessive pain at having been forced to wound the feelings of one whom she wished to be permitted to love, because she had once been her mother’s dearest friend. After this scene, the Livingstones, partly from the love of mischief, and partly from the love of fun, used to put similar questions to Fanny, in the old lady’s presence, till, at last, displeased and indignant at her bluntness and ill-breeding, she scarcely noticed or spoke to her. In the meanwhile, Cecilia Livingstone became an object of increasing interest to her; for she had a lover to whom she was

greatly attached, but who would not be in a situation to marry for many years.

This young man was frequently at the house, and was as polite and attentive to the old lady, when she was present, as the rest of the family; but, like them, he was ever ready to indulge in a laugh at her credulous simplicity, and especially at her continually expressing her belief, as well as her hopes, that they were all beginning to think less of the present world, and more of the next; and as Alfred Lawrie, (Cecilia's lover,) as well as the Livingstones, possessed no inconsiderable powers of mimicry, they exercised them with great effect on the manner and tones of her whom they called the *over-dressed* saint, unrestrained, alas! by the consciousness that she was their present, and would, as they expected, be their *future* benefactress.

That confiding and unsuspecting being was, meanwhile, considering, that though her health was injured by a long residence in a warm climate, she might still live many years; and that, as Cecilia might not therefore possess the fortune which she had bequeathed to her till "youth and genial years were flown," it would be better to give it to her during her lifetime. "I will do so," she said to herself, (tears rushing into her eyes as she thought of the happiness which she was going to impart,) "and then the young people can marry directly!"

She took this resolution one day when the Livingstones believed that she had left her home on a visit. Consequently, having no expectation of

seeing her for some time, they had taken advantage of her long vainly expected absence to make some engagements which they knew she would have excessively disapproved. But, though as yet they knew it not, the old lady had been forced to put off her visit; a circumstance which she did not at all regret, as it enabled her to go sooner on her benevolent errand.

The engagement of the Livingstones for that day was a rehearsal of a private play at their house, which they were afterward, and during their saintly friend's absence, to perform at the house of a friend; and a large room, called the library, in which there was a wide, commodious screen, was selected as the scene of action.

Fanny Barnwell, who disliked private and other theatricals as much as their old friend herself, was to have no part in the performance; but, as they were disappointed of their prompter that evening, she was, though with great difficulty, persuaded to perform the office, for *that night only*.

It was to be a dress rehearsal; and the parties were in the midst of adorning themselves, when, to their great consternation, they saw their supposed distant friend coming up the street, and evidently intending them a visit. What was to be done? To admit her was impossible. They therefore called up a new servant, who only came to them the day before, and who did not know the worldly consequence of their unwelcome guest; and Cecilia said to her, "You see that old lady yonder: when she knocks, be sure you say

that *we are not at home*; and you had better add, that we shall not be home *till bed-time*:" thus adding the *lie of* CONVENIENCE to other deceptions. Accordingly, when she knocked at the door, the girl spoke as she was desired to do, or rather she improved upon it; for she said that "her ladies had been out all day, and would not return till two o'clock in the morning." "Indeed! that is unfortunate," said their disappointed visitor, stopping to deliberate whether she should not leave a note of agreeable surprise for Cecilia; but the girl, who held the door in her hand, seemed so impatient to get rid of her, that she resolved not to write, and then turned away.

The girl was really in haste to return to the kitchen; for she was gossiping with an old fellow-servant. She therefore neglected to go back to her anxious employers; but Cecilia ran down the back stairs, to interrogate her, exclaiming, "Well: what did she say? I hope she did not suspect that we were at home." "No, to be sure not, Miss; how should she? for I said even more than you told me to say;" repeating her additions; being eager to prove her claim to the confidence of her new mistress. "But are you sure that she is really gone from the door?" "To be sure, Miss." "Still, I wish you could go and see; because we have not seen her pass the window, though we heard the door shut." "Dear me, Miss, how should you? for I looked out after her, and I saw her go down the street under the windows, and turn—yes, I am sure that I

saw her turn into a shop. However, I will go and look, if you desire it." She did so; and certainly saw nothing of the dreaded guest. Therefore, her young ladies finished their preparations, devoid of fear. But the truth was, that the girl, little aware of the importance of this unwelcomed lady, and concluding she could not be a *friend*, but merely some *troublesome nobody*, showed her contempt and her anger at being detained so long, by throwing to the street-door with such violence, that it did not really close; and the old lady, who had ordered her carriage to come for her at a certain hour, and was determined, on second thoughts, to sit down and wait for it, was able, unheard, to push open the door, and to enter the library unperceived;—for the girl lied to those who bade her lie, when she said she saw her walk away.

In that room Mrs. Atherling found a sofa; and though she wondered at seeing a large screen opened before it, she seated herself on it, and, being fatigued with her walk, soon fell asleep. But her slumber was broken very unpleasantly; for she heard as she awoke the following dialogue on the entrance of Cecilia and her lover, accompanied by Fanny. "Well, I am so glad we got rid of Mrs. Atherling so easily!" cried Cecilia. "That new girl seems apt. Some servants deny one so as to show one is at home." "I should like them the better for it," said Fanny. "I hate to see any one ready at telling a falsehood." "Poor little conscientious dear!" said the lover, mimicking her; "one would think the dressed-up saint

had made you as methodistical as herself.”

“What! I suppose, Miss Fanny, you would have had us let the old quiz in.” “To be sure I would; and I wonder you could be denied to so kind a friend. Poor dear Mrs. Atherling! how hurt she would be if she knew you were at home!”

“*Poor dear*, indeed! Do not be so affected, Fanny. How should you care for Mrs. Atherling, when you know that she dislikes you?”

“*Dislikes* me! O yes: I fear she does!” “I am *sure* she does,” replied Cecilia; “for you are downright rude to her. Did you not say, only the day before yesterday, when she said, ‘There, Miss Barnwell, I hope I have *at last* gotten a cap which you like’—‘No: I am sorry to say you have not?’” “To be sure I did: I could not tell a falsehood, even to please Mrs. Atherling, though she was my own dear mother’s dearest friend.”

“Your mother’s friend, Fanny? I never heard *that* before!” said the lover. “Did you not know that, Alfred?” said Cecilia; eagerly adding, “But Mrs. *Atherling* does not know it;” giving a meaning look, as if to say, “and do not you *tell* her.” “Would she *did* know it!” said Fanny, mournfully, “for though I dare not tell her so, lest she should abuse my poor mother, as you say she would, Cecilia, because she was so angry at her marriage with my misguided father, still I think she would look kindly on her once dear friend’s orphan child, and like me in spite of my honesty.” “No, no, silly girl: honesty is usually its own reward. Alfred, what do you think? Our old friend, who is not very penetrating, said



one day to her, 'I suppose you think my caps too young for me;' and that true young person replied, 'Yes, madam, I do.' " "And would do so again, Cecilia; and it was far more friendly and kind to say so than flatter her on her dress, as you do, and then laugh at it when her back is turned. I hate to hear any one mimicked and laughed at; and more especially my mamma's old friend." "There, there, child! your sentimentality makes me sick. But come: let us begin." "Yes," cried Alfred, "let us rehearse a little, before the rest of the party come. I should like to hear Mrs. Atherling's exclamations, if she knew what we were doing. She would say thus." Here he gave a most accurate representation of the poor old lady's voice and manner, and her fancied abuse of private theatricals, while Cecilia cried, "Bravo! bravo!" and Fanny, "Shame! shame!" till the other Livingstones, and the rest of the company, who now entered, drowned her cry in their loud applauses and louder laughter.

The old lady, whom surprise, anger, and wounded sensibility had hitherto kept *silent* and *still* in her involuntary hiding-place, now rose up, and, mounting on the sofa, looked over the top of the screen, full of reproachful meaning, on the conscious offenders!

What a moment, to them, of overwhelming surprise and consternation! The cheeks, flushed with malicious triumph and satirical pleasure, became covered with a deeper blush of detected treachery, or pale with fear of its consequences; and the eyes, so lately beaming with ungenerous,

injurious satisfaction, were now cast, with painful shame, upon the ground, unable to meet the justly indignant glance of her whose kindness they had repaid with such palpable and base ingratitude! "An admirable likeness indeed, Alfred Lawrie," said their undeceived dupe, breaking her perturbed silence, and coming down from her elevation; "but it will cost you more than you are at present aware of. But who art thou?" she added, addressing Fanny, (who, though it might have been a moment of triumph to her, felt and looked as if she had been a sharer in the guilt,) "Who art *thou*, my honorable, kind girl? And who was your mother?" "Your Fanny Beaumont," replied the quick-feeling orphan, bursting into tears. "Fanny Beaumont's child! and it was concealed from me!" said she, folding the weeping girl to her heart. "But it was all of a piece; all treachery and insincerity, from the beginning to the end. However, I am undeceived before it was too late." She then disclosed to the detected family her generous motive for the unexpected visit, and declared her thankfulness for what had taken place, as far as she was herself concerned; though she could not but deplore, as a Christian, the discovered turpitude of those whom she had fondly loved.

"I have now," she continued, "to make amends to one whom I have hitherto not treated kindly; but I have at length been enabled to discover an undeserved friend, amidst undeserved foes. My dear child," added she, parting Fanny's dark ringlets, and gazing tearfully in her face, "I must

have been *blind*, as well as blinded, not to see your likeness to your dear mother. Will you live with me, Fanny, and be unto me as a DAUGHTER?" "O, most gladly!" was the eager and agitated reply. "You artful creature!" exclaimed Cecilia, pale with rage and mortification, "you knew very well that she was behind the screen." "I know that she could *not* know it," replied the old lady; "and you, Miss Livingstone, assert what you do not yourself believe. But come, Fanny, let us go and meet my carriage; for no doubt your presence here is now as unwelcome as mine." But Fanny lingered, as if reluctant to depart. She could not bear to leave the Livingstones in anger. They had been kind to her, and she would fain have parted with them affectionately; but they all preserved a sullen, indignant silence, and scornfully repelled her advances. "You see that you must not tarry here, my good girl," observed the old lady, smiling, "so let us depart." They did so; leaving the Livingstones and the lover, not deploring their fault, but lamenting their detection: lamenting also the hour when they added the lies of CONVENIENCE to their other deceptions, and had thereby enabled their unsuspecting dupe to detect those falsehoods, the result of their avaricious fears, which may be justly entitled the LIES OF INTEREST.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## LIES OF FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY.

LIES OF FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY come next to be considered; and I think that I am right in asserting that such lies—lies intended *wilfully* to destroy the reputation of men and women, to injure their characters in public or private estimation, and for ever cloud over their prospects in life—are less frequent than falsehoods of any other description.

Not that malignity is an unfrequent feeling; not that dislike, or envy, or jealousy, would not gladly vent itself in many a malignant falsehood, or other efforts of the same kind, against the peace and fame of its often innocent and unconscious objects; but that the arm of the law, *in some measure* at least, defends reputations; and if it should not have been able to deter the slanderer from his purpose, it can at least avenge the slandered.

Still, such is the prevailing tendency in society to prey on the reputations of others, especially of those who are at all *distinguished*, either in public or private life; such the propensity to impute BAD MOTIVES to GOOD ACTIONS; so common the fiend-like pleasure of finding or imagining blemishes in beings on whom even a *motive-judging world* in general gazes with respectful admiration, and bestows the sacred tribute of well-earned

praise—that I am convinced there are many persons, worn both in mind and body by the consciousness of being the objects of calumnies and suspicions which they have it not in their power to combat, who steal broken-hearted to their graves, thankful for the summons of death, and hoping to find refuge from the injustice of their fellow-creatures in the bosom of their God and Saviour.

With the following *illustration* of the LIE OF FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY, I shall conclude my observations on this subject.

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### THE ORPHAN.

THERE are persons in the world whom circumstances have so entirely preserved from intercourse with the base and the malignant, and whose dispositions are so free from bitterness, that they can scarcely believe in the existence of baseness and malignity. Such persons, when they hear of injuries committed, and wrongs done, at the instigation of the most trivial and apparently worthless motives, are apt to exclaim, “You have been imposed upon. No one could be so wicked as to act thus upon such slight grounds; and you are not relating as a sober observer of human nature and human action, but with the exaggerated view of a dealer in fiction and romance.” Happy, and privileged beyond the ordinary charter of human beings, are those who can thus exclaim; but the inhabitants of the tropics might, with equal jus-

tice, refuse to believe in the existence of that thing called snow, as these unbelievers in the moral turpitude in question refuse their credence to anecdotes which disclose it. All they can with propriety assert is, that such instances have not come under their cognizance. Yet, even to these favored few, I would put the following questions: Have you never experienced feelings of selfishness, anger, jealousy, or envy, which, though habits of religious and moral restraint taught you easily to subdue them, had yet troubled you long enough to make you fully sensible of their existence and their power? If so, is it not easy to believe that such feelings, when excited in the minds of those not under religious and moral guidance, may grow to such an unrestrained excess as to lead to actions and lies of terrible malignity?

I cannot but think that even the purest and best of my friends must answer in the affirmative. Still, they have reason to return thanks to their Creator that their lot has been cast amongst such "pleasant places;" and that it is theirs to breathe an atmosphere impregnated only with airs from heaven.

My lot, from a peculiar train of circumstances, has been somewhat differently cast; and when I give the following story to illustrate a lie of FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY, I do so with the certain knowledge that its foundation is truth.

CONSTANTIA GORDON was the only child of a professional man of great eminence, in a provincial town. Her mother was taken from her before



she had attained the age of womanhood, but not before the wise and pious precepts which she gave her had taken deep root, and had therefore counteracted the otherwise pernicious effects of a showy and elaborate education. Constantia's talents were considerable; and as her application was equal to them, she was, at an early age, distinguished in her native place for her learning and accomplishments.

Among the most intimate associates of her father, was a gentleman of the name of Overton; a man of some talent, and some acquirement; but, as his pretensions to eminence were not as universally allowed as he thought that they ought to have been, he was extremely tenacious of his own consequence, excessively envious of the slightest successes of others, while any dissent from his dogmas was an offence which his mean soul was incapable of forgiving.

It was only too natural that Constantia, as she was the petted, though not spoiled, child of a fond father, and the little sun of the circle in which she moved, was, perhaps, only too forward in giving her opinion on literature, and on some other subjects, which are not usually discussed by women at all, and still less by girls at her time of life; and she had sometimes ventured to disagree in opinion with Oracle Overton—the nickname by which this man was known. But he commonly took refuge in sarcastic observations on the ignorance and presumption of women in general, and of blue-stocking girls in particular, while on his face a grin of conscious superiority contended with the frown of pedantic indignation.

Hitherto this collision of wits had taken place in Constantia's domestic circle only; but, one day, Overton and the former met at the house of a nobleman in the neighborhood, and in company with many persons of considerable talent. While they were at table, the master of the house said that it was his birthday, and some one immediately proposed that all the guests, who could write verses, should produce one couplet, at least, in honor of the day.

But as Overton and Constantia were the only persons present who were known to be so gifted, they alone were assailed with earnest entreaties to employ their talents on the occasion. The latter, however, was prevented by timidity from compliance; and she persevered in her refusal, though Overton loudly conjured her to indulge the company with a display of her *wonderful genius*; accompanying his words with a sarcastic smile, which she well understood. Overton's muse, therefore, since Constantia would not let hers enter into the competition, walked over the course—having been highly applauded for a *mediocre* stanza of eight doggerel lines. But as Constantia's timidity vanished when she found herself alone with the ladies in the drawing-room, who were most of them friends of hers, she at length produced some verses, which not only delighted her affectionate companions, but, when shown to the gentlemen, drew from them more and warmer encomiums than had been bestowed on the frothy tribute of her competitor; while the writhing and mortified Overton forced himself to say they were very well,

very well indeed, for a scribbling miss of sixteen: insinuating at the same time that the pretended extempore was one written by her father at home, and gotten by heart by herself. But the giver of the feast declared that he had forgotten it was his birthday till he sat down to table; therefore, as every one said, although the verses were written by a girl of sixteen only, they would have done honor to a riper age, Overton gained nothing but added mortification from his mean attempt to blight Constantia's well-earned laurels, especially as his ungenerous conduct drew on him severe animadversions from some of the other guests. His fair rival also unwittingly deepened his resentment against herself, by venturing in a playful manner, being emboldened by success, to dispute some of his paradoxes; and once she did it so successfully that she got the laugh against Overton, in a manner so offensive to his self-love, that he suddenly left the company, vowing revenge in his heart against the being who had thus shone at his expense. However, he continued to visit at her father's house; and was still considered as their most intimate friend.

Constantia, meanwhile, increased not only both in beauty and accomplishments, but in qualities of a more precious nature; namely, in a knowledge of her Christian duties. But her charities were performed in secret; and so fearful was she of being deemed righteous overmuch, and considered as an enthusiast, even by her father himself, that the soundness of her religious character was known only to the skeptical Overton, and two or three

more of her associates, while it was a notorious fact that the usual companions of her father and herself were freethinkers and latitudinarians, both in politics and religion. But if Constantia did not lay open her religious faith to those by whom she was surrounded, she fed its lamp in her own bosom, with never-ceasing watchfulness; and, like the solitary light in a cottage on the dark and lonely moor, it beamed on her hours of solitude and retirement, cheering and warming her amidst surrounding darkness.

It was to do yet more for her. It was to support her, not only under the sudden death of a father whom she tenderly loved, but under the unexpected loss of income which his death occasioned. On examining his affairs, it was discovered that, when his debts were all paid, there would be a bare maintenance only remaining for his afflicted orphan. Constantia's sorrow, though deep, was quiet and gentle as her nature; and she felt, with unspeakable thankfulness, that she owed the tranquillity and resignation of her mind to her religious convictions alone.

The interesting orphan had only just returned into the society of her friends, when a Sir Edward Vandeleur, a young baronet of large fortune, came on a visit in the neighborhood.

Sir Edward was the darling and pride of a highly gifted mother, and several amiable sisters; and Lady Vandeleur, who was in declining health, had often urged her son to let her have the satisfaction of seeing him married before she was taken away from him.

But it was no easy thing for a man like Sir Edward Vandeleur to find a wife suited to him. His feelings were too much under a strong religious restraint to admit of his falling violently in love, as the phrase is; and beauty and accomplishments had no chance of captivating his heart, unless they were accompanied by qualities which fully satisfied his principles and his judgment.

It was at this period of his life that Sir Edward Vandeleur was introduced to Constantia Gordon, at a small conversation party, at the house of a mutual acquaintance.

Her beauty, her graceful manners, over which sorrow had cast a new and sobered charm, and her great conversational powers, made her presently an object of interest to Sir Edward; and when he heard her story, that interest was considerably increased by pity for her orphan state and altered circumstances.

Therefore, though Sir Edward saw Constantia rarely, and never, except at one house, he felt her at every interview growing more on his esteem and admiration; and he often thought of the recluse in her mourning simple attire, and wished himself by her side, when he was the courted, flattered attendant on a reigning belle.

Not that he was in love; that is, not that he had imbibed an attachment which his reason could not at once enable him to conquer, if it should ever disapprove its continuance; but his judgment, as well as his taste, told him that Constantia was the sort of woman to pass life with. "Seek for a companion in a wife!" had always been his mother's advice. "Seek for a woman

who has understanding enough to know her duties, and piety and principle enough to enable her to fulfil them; one who can teach her children to follow in her steps, and form them for virtue here, and happiness hereafter!" "Surely," thought Sir Edward, as he recalled this natural advice, "I have found the woman so described in Constantia Gordon!" But he was still too prudent to pay her any marked attention; especially as Lady Vandeleur had recommended caution.

At this moment his mother wrote thus:

"I do not see any apparent objection to the lady in question. Still, be cautious! Is there no one at—— who has known her from her childhood, and can give you an account of her and her moral and religious principles, which can be relied upon? Death, that great discoverer of secrets, proved that her father was not a very worthy man; still, bad parents have good children, and *vice versâ*; but, inquire, and be wary."

The day after Sir Edward received this letter, he was introduced to Overton at the house of a gentleman in the neighborhood; and at the most unfortunate period possible for Constantia Gordon. Overton had always pretended to have a sincere regard for the poor orphan, and no one was more loud in regrets for her reduced fortune; but, as he was fond of giving her pain, he used to mingle with his pity so many severe remarks on her father's thoughtless conduct, that had he not been her father's most familiar friend, she would have forbidden him her presence.

One day, having found her alone at her lodgings, he accompanied his expressions of affected



condolence with a proposal to give her a bank-note now and then, to buy her a new gown; as he was, he said, afraid that she would not have money sufficient to set off her charms to advantage. To real kindness, however vulgarly worded, Constantia's heart was ever open; but she immediately saw that this offer, prefaced as it was by abuse of her father, was merely the result of malignity and coarseness combined; and her spirit, though habitually gentle, was roused to indignant resentment.

But who, that has ever experienced the bitterness of feeling excited by the cold, spiteful efforts of a malignant temper to irritate a gentle and generous nature, can withhold their sympathy and pardon from Constantia on this occasion? At last, gratified at having made his victim awhile forego her nature, and at being now enabled to represent her as a vixen, he took his leave with hypocritical kindness, calling her his "*naughty, scolding Con;*" leaving her to humble herself before that Being whom she feared to have offended by her violence, and to weep over the recollection of an interview which had added, to her other miseries, that of self-reproach.

Overton, meanwhile, did not retire unhurt from the combat. The orphan had uttered, in her agony, some truths which he could not forget. She had held up to him a mirror of himself, from which he found it difficult to turn away; while in proportion to his sense of suffering was his resentment against its fair cause; and his desire of revenge was in proportion to both.

It was on this very day that he dined in com-

pany with Sir Edward Vandeleur, who was soon informed, by the master of the house, that Overton had been, from her childhood, the friend and intimate of Constantia Gordon; and the same gentleman informed Overton, in private, that Sir Edward was supposed to entertain thoughts of paying his addresses to Constantia.

Inexpressible was Overton's consternation at hearing that this girl, whose poverty he had insulted, whom he disliked because she had been a thorn to his self-love, and under whose just severity he was still smarting, was likely, not only to be removed from his power to torment her, but to be raised above him by a fortunate marriage.

Great was his triumph, therefore, when Sir Edward, before they parted, requested an interview with him the following morning, at his lodgings in the town of——; adding, that he wished to ask him some questions concerning their mutual friend, Constantia Gordon.

Accordingly, they met; and the following conversation took place. Sir Edward began by candidly confessing the high opinion which he had conceived of Constantia, and his earnest wish to have its justice confirmed by the testimony of her oldest and most intimate friend. "Sir Edward," replied the exulting hypocrite, with well-acted reluctance, "you put an honorable and a kind-hearted man, like myself, into a complete *embarras*." "Sir, what do I hear?" cried Sir Edward, starting from his seat: "Can you feel any embarrassment when called upon to bear testimony in

favor of Constantia Gordon?" "I dare say *you* cannot think such a thing possible," he replied, with a sneer; "for men in love are usually blind." "But I am not in love yet," eagerly replied Sir Edward; "and it very much depends on this conversation whether I ever am so with the lady in question." "Well then, Sir Edward, however unpalatable, I must speak the truth. I need not tell you that Constantia is beautiful, accomplished, and *talented*, is, I think, the *new* word." "No, sir: I already know she is all these; and she appears to me as gentle, virtuous, and pious, as she is beautiful." "I dare say she does; but, as to her *gentleness*—however, I might provoke her improperly; but, I assure you, she flew into such a passion with me yesterday that I thought she would have struck me!" "Is it possible? I really feel a difficulty in believing you!" "No doubt: so let us talk of something else." "No, no, Mr. Overton, I came hither to be informed on a subject deeply interesting to me, and, at whatever risk of disappointment, I will await all you have to say." "I have nothing to say, Sir Edward: you know Con is beautiful and charming; and is not that enough?" "No! it is *not* enough. Outward graces are not sufficient to captivate and fix me, unless they are accompanied by charms that fade not with time, but blossom to eternity." "Whew!" exclaimed Overton, with well-acted surprise. "I see that you are a Methodist, Sir Edward; and if so, my friend Con will not suit you." "Does it follow that I am a Methodist, because I require that my wife should

be a woman of pious and moral habits?" "O! for *morals*, there, indeed, my friend Con would suit you well enough. Let her morals pass; but as to her *piety*, religion will never turn her head." "What do you mean, Mr. Overton?" "Why, sir, our lovely friend has learned, from the company which she has kept, to think freely on such subjects; very freely; for women, you know, always go to extremes. *Men* keep within the rational bounds of *Deism*; but the female skeptic, weaker in intellect, and incapable of reasoning, never rests till she loses herself in the mazes and absurdities of Atheism." Had Sir Edward Vandeleur seen the fair smooth skin of Constantia suddenly covered with leprosy, he would not have been more shocked than he was at being informed of this utter blight to her mental beauty in his rightly judging eyes; and, starting from his seat, he exclaimed, "Do you really mean to assert that your fair friend is an Atheist?" "Sir Edward, I am Constantia's friend; and I was her father's friend; and I am sorry these things have been forced from me; but I could not deceive an honorable man, who placed confidence also in my honor; though, as Constantia is the child of an old friend, and poor, it would be, perhaps, a saving to my pocket if she were well married." "Then it is true!" said Sir Edward, clasping his hands in agony; "and this lovely girl is what I hate to name! Yet she looks so right-minded! and I have thought the expression of her dark-blue eye was that of pious resignation!" "Yes, yes: I know that look; and she knows that is her

*prettiest* look. That eye, half turned up, shows her fine, long, dark eyelashes to great advantage!" "Alas!" replied Sir Edward, deeply sighing, "if this be so—O! what are looks? Good morning. You have distressed, but you have *saved* me." When Overton, soon after, saw Sir Edward drive past in his splendid curricie, he exulted that he had prevented Constantia from ever sitting there by his side.

Yet he was, as I have said before, one of the few who knew how deeply and sincerely Constantia was a believer; for he had himself, in vain, attempted to shake her belief, and thence he had probably a double pleasure in representing her as he did.

Sir Edward was engaged that evening to meet Constantia at the accustomed house; and as his attentions to her had been rather marked, and her friends, with the usual dangerous officiousness on such occasions, had endeavored to convince her that she had made a *conquest*, as the phrase is, of the young baronet, the expectation of meeting him was become a circumstance of no small interest to her; though she was far too humble to be convinced that they were right in their conjectures.

But the mind of Constantia was too much under the guidance of religious principle to allow her to love any man, however amiable, unless she was sure of being beloved by him. She was too delicate, and had too much self-respect, to be capable of such a weakness; she therefore escaped that danger of which I have seen the peace of

some young women become the victim ; namely, that of being talked and flattered into a hopeless passion by the idle wishes and representations of gossiping acquaintances. And well was it for her peace that she had been thus *holily* on her guard ; for when Sir Edward Vandeleur, instead of keeping his engagement, sent a note to inform her friend that he was not able to wait on her, as he thought of going to London the next day, Constantia felt that the idea of his attachment was as unfounded as it had been pleasing, and she rejoiced that the illusion had not been long enough to endanger her tranquillity. Still, she could not but own, in the secret of her heart, that the prospect of passing life with a being apparently so suited to herself, was one on which her thoughts had dwelt with involuntary pleasure ; and a tear started to her eyes, at the idea that she might see him no more. But she considered it as the tear of weakness, and though her sleep that night was short, it was tranquil, and she arose the next morning to resume the duties of the day with her accustomed alacrity. In her walks she met Sir Edward, but, happily for her, as he was leaning on Overton's arm, whom she had not seen since she had parted with him in anger, a turn was given to her feelings, by the approach of the latter, which enabled her to conquer at once her emotion at the unexpected sight of the former. Still, the sight of Overton occasioned in her disagreeable and painful recollections, which gave an unpleasing and equivocal expression to her beautiful features, and enabled Overton to observe,



“ You see, Sir Edward, how her conscience flies in her face at seeing me ! How are you ? How are you ? ” said Overton, catching her hand as she passed. “ Have you forgiven me yet ? O ! you vixen, how you scolded me the other day ! ” Constantia, too much mortified and agitated to speak, and repel the charge, replied by a look of indignation ; and, snatching her hand away, she bowed to Sir Edward, and hastened out of sight. “ You see,” cried Overton, “ that she resents still ! and how like a fury she looked ! You must be convinced that I told you the truth. Now could you believe, Sir Edward, that pretty Con could have looked in that manner ? ” “ Certainly not ; and appearances are indeed deceitful. ” Still, Sir Edward wished Constantia had given him an opportunity of bidding her farewell ; however, he left his good wishes and respects for her with their mutual friend, and set off that evening to join his mother at Hastings. “ But are you sure, Edward,” said Lady Vandeleur, when he had related to her all that had passed, “ that this Overton is a man to be depended upon ? ” “ O yes ! and he could have no *motive* for calumniating her, but the contrary, as it would have been a relief to his mind and pocket to get his old friend’s daughter well married. ” “ But does she appear to her other friends neglectful of her religious duties, as if she really had no religion at all ? ” “ So far from it, that she has always been punctual in the *outward* performance of them ; therefore, no one but Overton, the confidential friend and intimate of the family, could suspect or *know* her real

opinions : thus she adds, I fear, *hypocrisy* to skepticism. Overton also accuses her of being violent in her temper ; and I was unexpectedly enabled to see the truth of this accusation, in a measure, confirmed. Therefore, indeed, dear mother, all I have to do is to forget her, and resume my intention of accompanying you and my sisters to the continent." Accordingly, they set off very soon on a foreign tour.

Constantia, after she left Overton and Sir Edward so hastily and suddenly, returned home in no enviable state of mind ; because she felt sure that her manner had been such as to convince the latter that she was the violent creature which Overton had represented her to be ; and though she had calmly resigned all idea of being beloved by Sir Edward Vandeleur, she was not entirely indifferent to his good opinion. Besides, she feared that her quitting him without one word of kind farewell, might appear to him a proof of pique and disappointment ; nor could she be quite sure that somewhat of that feeling did not impel her to hasten abruptly away ; and it was some time before she could conquer her self-blame and her regret. But, at length, she reflected that there was a want of proper self-government in dwelling at all on recollections of Sir Edward Vandeleur ; and she forced herself into society and absorbing occupation.

Hitherto Constantia had been contented to remain in idleness ; but as her income was, she found, barely equal to her maintenance, and she was therefore obliged to relinquish nearly all her

charities, she resolved to turn her talents to account; and was just about to decide between two plans, which she had thought desirable, when an uncle in India died, and the question was decided in a very welcome and unexpected manner. Till this gentleman married, her father had such large expectations from him, that he had fancied them a sufficient excuse for his profuse expenditure; but when his brother, by having children, destroyed his hopes of wealth from that quarter, he had not strength of mind enough to break the expensive habits which he had acquired. To the deserving child, however, was destined the wealth withheld from the undeserving parent. Constantia's uncle's wife and children died before he did, and she became sole heiress to his large fortune. This event communicated a sensation of gladness to the whole town in which the amiable orphan resided.

Constantia had borne her faculties so meekly, had been so actively benevolent, and was thence so generally beloved, that she was now daily overpowered with thankful and pleasing emotion, at beholding countenances which, at sight of her, were lighted up with affectionate sympathy and joy.

Overton was one of the first persons whom she desired to see, on this accession of fortune. Her truly Christian spirit had long made her wish to hold out to him her hand, in token of forgiveness; but she wished to do so more especially now, because he could not suspect her of being influenced by any mercenary views. Overton,

however, meant to call on her, whether she invited him or not; as, such was his love and respect for *wealth*, that, though the *poor* Constantia was full of faults in his eye, the *rich* Constantia was very likely to appear to him, in time, impeccable. He was at this period Mayor of the place in which he lived; and, having been knighted for carrying up an address, he became desirous of using the privilege which, according to Shakespeare's Falconbridge, knighthood gives a man, of making "any Joan a lady." Nor was it long before he entertained serious thoughts of marrying. And why not? as he was only fifty; was very young-looking for his age; was excessively handsome still; and had now a title in addition to a good fortune. The only difficulty was to make a choice; for he was very sure that *he* must be the choice of any one to whom he offered himself.

But where could he find in one woman all the qualities which he required in a wife? She must have youth and beauty, or he could not love her; good principles, or he could not trust her; and, though he was not religious himself, he had a certain consciousness that the best safeguard for a woman's principles was to be found in piety; *therefore*, he resolved that his wife should be a *religious* woman. Temper, patience, and forbearance, were also requisites in the woman he married; and, as the last and best recommendation, she must have a large fortune. Reasonable man! Youth, beauty, temper, virtue, piety, and riches! But what woman of his acquaintance possessed all

these? No one, he believed, but that forgiving being whom he had represented as an Atheist—"that vixen Con!"—and while this conviction came over his mind, a blush of shame passed over even his brassy brow. However, it was soon succeeded by one of pleasure, when he thought that, as Constantia was evidently uneasy till she had *made it up with him*, as the phrase is, it was not unlikely that she had a secret liking to him; and as to her scribbling verses, and pretending to be literary, he would take care that she should not write when she was his wife; and he really thought he had better propose to her at once, especially as it was a duty in him to make her a lady himself, since he had prevented another man's doing so. There was perhaps another inducement to marry Constantia. It would give him an opportunity of tormenting her now and then, and making her smart for former impertinences. Perhaps this motive was nearly as strong as the rest. Be that as it may, Overton had, at length, the presumption to make proposals of marriage to the young and lovely heiress, who, though ignorant of his base conduct to her, and the LIE OF FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY with which he had injured her fame and blighted her prospects, had still a dislike to his manners and character, which it was impossible for any thing to overcome. He was therefore refused, and in a manner so decided, and, spite of herself, so haughty, that Overton's heart renewed all its malignity toward her; and his manner became so rude and offensive, that she was constrained to refuse him admittance, and go

on a visit to a friend at some distance, intending not to return till the house which she had purchased in a village near to —— was ready for her. But she had not been absent many months when she received a letter one evening, to inform her that her dearest friend at —— was supposed to be in the greatest danger, and she was requested to set off directly. To disobey this summons was impossible; and, as the mail passed the house where she was, and she was certain of getting on faster that way than any other, she resolved, accompanied by her servant, to go by mail, if possible; and, happily, there were two places vacant. It was night when Constantia and her maid entered the coach, in which two gentlemen were already seated; and, to the consternation of Constantia, she soon saw, as they passed near a lamp, that her *vis-a-vis* was Overton! He recognized her at the same moment; and instantly began, in the French language, to express his joy at meeting her, and to profess the faithfulness of his fervent affection. In vain did she try to force conversation with the other passenger, who seemed willing to talk, and who, though evidently not a gentleman, was much preferable, in her opinion, to the new Sir Richard. He would not allow her to attend to any conversation but his own; and, as it was with difficulty that she could keep her hand from his rude grasp, she tried to change seats with her maid; but Overton forcibly withheld her; and she thought it was better to endure the evil patiently, than violently resist it. When the mail stopped, that the



passengers might sup, Constantia hoped *Overton* would, at least, leave her for a time; but, though the other passengers got out, he kept his seat, and was so persevering, and was so much more disagreeable when the restraint imposed on him by the presence of others was removed, that she was glad when the coach was again full and the mail drove off.

*Overton*, however, became so increasingly offensive to her, that at length she assured him, in language the most solemn and decided, that *nothing* should ever induce her to be his wife; and that, were she penniless, *service* would be more desirable to her than union with him.

This roused his anger even to frenzy; and, still speaking French, a language which he was sure the illiterate man in the corner could not understand, he told her that she refused him only because she loved Sir Edward Vandeleur; "but," said he, "you have no chance of obtaining him. I have taken care to prevent *that*. I gave him such a character of you as frightened him away from you, and——" "Base-minded man!" cried Constantia; "what did you, what could you say against my character?" "O! I said nothing against your morals. I only told him you were an Atheist, and a vixen, that is all; and you know you are the latter, though not the former; but are more like a Methodist than an Atheist!" "And you told him these horrible falsehoods! And if you had not, would he have—— Did he then—— But I know not what I say; and I am miserable! Cruel, wicked man! how could

you thus dare to injure and misrepresent an unprotected orphan ! and the child of your friend ! and to calumniate me to *him* too ! to Sir Edward Vandeleur ! O ! it was cruel indeed !” “ What ! then you wished to please him, did you ? Answer me !” he vociferated, seizing both her hands in his : “ are you attached to Sir Edward Vandeleur ?” But before Constantia could answer no, and while, faintly screaming with apprehension and pain, she vainly tried to free herself from Overton’s nervous grasp, a powerful hand rescued her from the ruffian gripe. Then, while the dawn shone brightly upon her face, Constantia and Overton at the same moment recognized, in her rescuer, Sir Edward Vandeleur himself !

He was just returned from France, and was on his way to the neighborhood of — ; being now, as he believed, able to see Constantia with entire indifference ; when, as one of his horses became ill, he resolved to take that place in the mail which the other passenger had quitted for the box ; and had thus the pleasure of hearing all suspicions, all imputations against the character of Constantia cleared off and removed at once, and for ever ! Constantia’s joy was little inferior to his own ; but it was soon lost in terror at the probable result of the angry emotions of Sir Edward and Overton. Her fear, however, vanished when the former assured the latter that the man who could injure an innocent woman, by a lie of FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY, was beneath even the resentment of an honorable man.

I shall only add, that Overton left the mail at the next stage, baffled, disgraced, and miserable; that Constantia found her friend recovering; and that the next time she travelled along that road, it was as the bride of Sir Edward Vandeleur.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### LIES OF SECOND-RATE MALIGNITY.

I HAVE observed in the foregoing chapter that LIES OF FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY are not frequent, because the arm of the law defends reputations; but against lies of second-rate malignity the law holds out no protection; nor is there a tribunal of sufficient power either to deter any one from uttering them, or to punish the utterer. The lies in question spring from the spirit of detraction—a spirit more widely diffused in society than any other; and it gives birth to satire, ridicule, mimicry, quizzing, and lies of second-rate malignity, as certainly as a wet season brings snails.

I shall now explain what I consider as lies of SECOND-RATE MALIGNITY: namely, tempting persons, by dint of flattery, to do what they are incapable of doing well, from the mean, malicious wish of leading them to expose themselves, in order that their tempter may enjoy a hearty laugh at their expense: persuading a man to drink more than his head can bear, by assurances that

*the wine is not strong*, and that he has not drunk as much as he thinks he has, in order to make him intoxicated, and that his persuaders may enjoy the cruel delight of witnessing his drunken silliness, his vainglorious boastings, and those physical contortions, or mental weaknesses, which intoxication is always sure to produce: complimenting either man or woman on qualities which they do not possess, in hopes of imposing on their credulity: praising a lady's work, or dress, to her face, and then, as soon as she is no longer present, not only abusing both her work and her dress, but laughing at her weakness in believing the praise sincere: lavishing encomiums on a man's abilities and learning in his presence, and then, as soon as he is out of hearing, expressing contempt for his credulous belief in the sincerity of the praises bestowed, and wonder that he should be so blind and conceited as not to know that he was in learning only a smatterer, and in understanding just not a fool:—all these are lies of *second-rate malignity*, which cannot be exceeded in *base and petty treachery*.

The following story will, I trust, explain fully what, in the common intercourse of society, I consider as LIES OF SECOND-RATE MALIGNITY.

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#### THE OLD GENTLEMAN AND THE YOUNG ONE.

NOTHING shows the force of habit more than the tenaciousness with which those adhere to

economical usages, who, by their own industry and unexpected good fortune, have become rich in the decline of life.

A gentleman, whom I shall call Dr. Albany, had, early in life, taken his degree at Cambridge, as a doctor of physic, and had settled in London as a physician ; but had worn away the best part of his existence in vain expectation of practice, when an old bachelor, a college friend whom he had greatly served, died, and left him the whole of his large fortune.

Dr. Albany had indeed *deserved* this bequest ; for he had rendered his friend the greatest of all services : he had rescued him, by his friendly advice and enlightened arguments, from skepticism apparently the most hopeless ; and, both by precept and example, had allured him along the way that leads to salvation.

But as wealth came to Dr. Albany too late in life for him to think of marrying, and as he had no relations who needed all his fortune, he resolved to leave the greatest part of it to those friends who wanted it the most.

Hitherto he had scarcely ever left London, as he had thought it right to wait at home to receive business, even though business never came ; but now he was resolved to renew the neglected acquaintances of his youth ; and knowing that some of his early friends lived near Cheltenham, Leamington, and Malvern, he resolved to visit those watering-places, in hopes of meeting there some of these well-remembered faces.

Most men, under his circumstances, would have

ordered a handsome carriage, and entered Cheltenham in style; but, as I before observed, habits of economy adhere so closely to persons thus situated, that Dr. Albany could not prevail on himself to travel in a manner more in apparent accordance with the acquisition of such a fortune. He therefore went by a cheap day-coach; nor did he take a servant with him. But, though still denying indulgences to himself, the first wish of his heart was to be generous to others; and, surely, that economy which is unaccompanied by avarice, may, even in the midst of wealth, be denominated a virtue.

While dinner was serving up, when they stopped on the road, Albany walked up a hill near the inn, and was joined there by a passenger from another coach. During their walk he observed a very pretty house on a rising ground in the distance, and asked his companion who lived there. The latter replied that it was the residence of a clergyman of the name of Musgrave. "Musgrave!" he eagerly replied, "what Musgrave? Is his name Augustus?" "Yes." "Is he married?" "Yes." "Has he a family?" "O yes, a large one—six daughters and one son; and he has found it a hard task to bring them up, as he wished to make them accomplished. The son is now going to college." "Are they an amiable family?" "Very: the girls sing and play well, and draw well." "And what is the son to be?" "A clergyman." "Has he any chance of a living?" "Not that I know of; but he must be something; and a legacy which the father has



just had, of a few hundred pounds, will enable him to pay college expenses, till his son gets ordained and can take curacies." "Is Musgrave," said Albany, after a pause, "a likely man to give a cordial welcome to an old friend, whom he has not seen for many years?" "O yes: he is very hospitable; and there he is now, going into his own gate." "Then I will not go on," said Albany, hastening to the stables. "There, coachman," cried he, "take your money, and give me my little portmanteau."

Augustus Musgrave had been a favorite college friend of Dr. Albany's, and he had many associations with his name and image, which were dear to his heart.

The objects of them were gone for ever; but, thus recalled, they came over his mind like strains of long-forgotten music, which he had loved and carolled in youth: throwing so strong a feeling of tenderness over the recollection of Musgrave, that he felt an irresistible desire to see him again, and greet his wife and children in the language of glowing good-will.

But, when he was introduced into his friend's presence, he had the mortification of finding that he was not recognized, and was obliged to tell his name.

The name, however, seemed to electrify Musgrave with affectionate gladness. He shook his old friend heartily by the hand, presented him to his wife and daughters, and for some minutes moved and spoke with the brightness and alacrity of early youth.

But the animation was momentary. The cares of a family, and the difficulty of keeping up the appearance of a gentleman with an income not sufficient for his means, had preyed on Musgrave's spirits; especially as he knew himself to be involved in debt. He had also other cares. The weakness of his nature, which he dignified by the name of tenderness of heart, had made him allow his wife and children to tyrannize over him; and his son, who was a universal quizzer, did not permit even his father to escape from his impertinent ridicule. But then Musgrave was assured, by his own family, that his son Marmaduke was a wit; and that, when he was once in orders, his talents would introduce him into the first circles, and lead to ultimate promotion in his profession.

I have before said that Dr. Albany did not travel like a gentleman; nor were his every-day clothes at all indicative of a well-filled purse. Therefore, though he was a physician, and a man of pleasing manners, Musgrave's fine lady-wife, and her *tonnish* daughters, could have readily excused him, if he had not persuaded their unexpected guest to stay a week with them; and with a frowning brow they saw the portmanteau, which the *strange person* had brought himself, carried into the best chamber.

But O! the astonishment and the comical grimaces with which Marmaduke Musgrave, on his coming in from fishing, beheld the new guest! Welcome smiled on one side of his face, but scorn sneered on the other; and when Albany retired to dress, he declared that the only thing which

consoled him for finding such a person forced on them, was the consciousness that he could extract great fun out of the old quiz, and serve him up for the entertainment of himself and friends.

To this amiable exhibition the mother and daughters looked forward with great satisfaction; while his father, having vainly talked of the dues of hospitality, gave in, knowing that it was in vain to contend: comforting himself with the hope that, while Marmaduke was quizzing his guest, he must necessarily leave him alone.

In the meanwhile, how different were the cogitations and the plans of the benevolent Albany! He had a long *tete-a-tete* walk with Musgrave, which had convinced him that his old friend was not happy, owing, he suspected, to his narrow income and expensive family.

Then his son was going to college—a dangerous and ruinous place; and, while the good old man was dressing for dinner, he had laid plans of action which made him feel more deeply thankful than ever for the wealth so unexpectedly bestowed on him. Of this wealth he had, as yet, said nothing to Musgrave. He was not purse-proud; and when he heard his friend complain of his poverty, he shrank from saying how rich he himself was. He had therefore simply said that he was enabled to retire from business; and when Musgrave saw his friend's independent, economical habits, as evinced by his mode of travelling, he concluded that he had only gained a small independence, sufficient for his slender wants.

To those to whom amusement is every thing,

and who can enjoy fun even when it is procured at the sacrifice of every benevolent feeling, that evening at the rectory, when the family party was increased by the arrival of some of the neighbors, would have been an *exquisite treat*; for Marmaduke played off the unsuspecting old man to admiration: mimicked him even to his face, unperceived by him; and having found out that Albany had not only a passion for music, but unfortunately fancied that he could sing himself, he urged his guest, by his flatteries—lies of SECOND-RATE MALIGNITY—to sing song after song, in order to make him expose himself for the entertainment of the company, and give him an opportunity of perfecting his mimicry.

Blind, infatuated, contemptible boy! short-sighted trifler on the path of the world! Marmaduke Musgrave saw not that the very persons who seemed to idolize his pernicious talents, must, unless they were lost to all sense of moral feeling, despise and distrust the youth who could play on the weakness of an unoffending, artless old man, and violate the rites of hospitality to his father's friend.

But Marmaduke had no heart, and but little mind; for mimicry is the lowest of the talents; and to be even a successful quizzer requires no talent at all. But his father had once a heart, though cares and pecuniary embarrassments had choked it up, and substituted selfishness for sensibility: the sight of his early companion had called some of the latter quality into action; and he seriously expostulated with his son on his daring to

turn so respectable a man into ridicule. But Marmaduke answered him by insolent disregard; and when he also said, "If your friend be so silly as to sing, that is, do what he *cannot* do, am I not justified in laughing at him?" Musgrave assented to the proposition. He might, however, have replied, "But you are not justified in lying, in order to urge him on, nor in saying to him, 'You can sing,' when you know he *cannot*. If he be *weak*, it is not necessary that you should be *treacherous*." But Musgrave always came off halting from a combat with his undutiful son: he therefore sighed, ceased, and turned away. On one point Marmaduke was right: when vanity prompts us to do what we cannot do well, while conceit leads us to fancy that our efforts are successful, we are perhaps fit objects for ridicule: a consideration which holds up to us this important lesson, namely, that our *own weakness* alone can, for any length of time, make us victims of the satire and malignity of others. When Albany's visit to Musgrave was drawing near to its conclusion, he was very desirous of being asked to prolong it, as he had become attached to his friend's children, from living with them, and witnessing their various accomplishments, and was completely the dupe of Marmaduke's treacherous compliments. He was therefore glad when he, as well as the Musgraves, was invited to dine at a house in the neighborhood, on the very day intended for his departure. This circumstance led them all, with one accord, to say that he must remain at least a day longer, while Marmaduke exclaimed, "Go you shall not! Our

friends would be so disappointed if they and their company did not hear you sing and act that sweet song about Chloe! And all the pleasure of the evening would be destroyed to me, dear sir, if you were not there!"

This was more than enough to make Albany put off his departure; and he accompanied the Musgraves to the dinner-party. They dined at an early hour; so early that it was yet daylight when, tea being over, the intended amusements of the afternoon began, of which the most prominent was to be the vocal powers of the mistaken Albany, who, without much pressing, after sundry flatteries from Marmaduke, cleared his throat, and began to sing and act the song of "Chloe." At first he was hoarse, and stopped to apologize for want of voice. "Nonsense!" cried Marmaduke: "you were never in better voice in your life! Pray go on: you are only nervous!" while the side of his face *not* next to Albany was distorted with laughter and ridicule. Albany, believing him, continued his song; and Marmaduke, sitting a little behind him, took off the distorted expression of his countenance and mimicked his odd action. But, at this moment, the broadest splendor of the setting sun threw its beams into a large pier-glass opposite, with such brightness that Albany's eyes were suddenly attracted to it, and thence to his treacherous neighbor, whom he detected in the act of mimicking him in mouth, attitude, and expression; while behind him he saw some of the company laughing with a degree of violence which was all but audible!



Albany paused in speechless consternation ; and when Marmaduke asked why “ he did not go on, as every one was delighted,” the susceptible old man hid his face in his hands, shocked, mortified, and miserable, but taught and enlightened. Marmaduke, however, nothing doubting, presumed to clap him on the back, again urging him to proceed ; but the indignant Albany, turning suddenly round, and throwing off his arm with angry vehemence, exclaimed, in the touching tone of wounded feeling, “ O ! thou serpent, that I would have cherished in my bosom, was it for thee to sting me thus ? But I was an old fool ! and the lesson, though a painful one, will, I trust, be salutary.” “ What is all this ? what do you mean ?” faltered out Marmaduke ; but the rest of the party had not courage enough to speak ; and many of them rejoiced in the detection of baseness which, though it amused their depraved taste, was very offensive to their moral sense. “ What does it mean ?” cried Albany. “ I appeal to all present, whether they do not understand my meaning, and whether my resentment be not just !” “ I hope, my dear friend, that you acquit *me*,” said the distressed father. “ Of all,” he replied, “ except of the fault of not having taught your son better morals and manners. Young man !” he continued, “ the next time you exhibit any one as your butt, take care that you do not sit opposite a pier-glass. And now, sir,” addressing himself to the master of the house, “ let me request to have a postchaise sent for to the nearest town directly.” “ Surely you will

not leave us, and in anger," cried all the Musgraves, Marmaduke excepted. "I hope I do not go in anger, but I cannot stay," cried he, "because I have lost my confidence in you." The gentleman of the house, who thought Albany right in going, and wished to make him all the amends he could for having allowed Marmaduke to turn him into ridicule, interrupted him, to say that his own carriage waited his orders, and would convey him whithersoever he wished. "I thank you, sir, and accept your offer," he replied, "since the sooner I quit this company, in which I have so lamentably exposed myself, the better it will be for you, and for us all." Having said this, he took the agitated Musgrave by the hand; bowed to his wife and daughters, who hid their confusion under distant and haughty airs; then, stepping opposite to Marmaduke, who felt it difficult to meet the expression of that eye, on which just anger and a sense of injury had bestowed a power hitherto unknown to it, he addressed him thus: "Before we part, I must tell you, young man, that I intended, urged I humbly trust by virtuous considerations, to expend on your maintenance at college a part of that large income which I cannot spend on myself. I had also given orders to my agent to purchase for me the advowson of a living now on sale, intending to give it to you: here is the letter to prove that I speak the truth; but I need not tell you that I cannot make the fortune which was left me by a pious friend assist a youth to take on himself the sacred profession of a Christian minister, who can utter falsehoods in

order to betray a fellow-creature into folly, utterly regardless of that Christian precept, 'Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you.' " He then took leave of the rest of the company, and drove off, leaving the Musgraves chagrined and ashamed, and bitterly mortified at the loss of the intended patronage to Marmaduke, especially when a gentleman present exclaimed, "No doubt this is the Dr. Albany to whom Clewes, of Trinity, left his large fortune!"

Albany, taught by his misadventure in this worldly and treacherous family, went soon after to the abode of another of his college friends, residing near Cheltenham. He expected to find this gentleman and his family in unclouded prosperity; but they were laboring under unexpected adversity, brought on them by the villany of others: he found them, however, bowed in lowly resignation before the inscrutable decree. On the pious son of these reduced but contented parents, he, in due time, bestowed the living intended for the treacherous Marmaduke. Under their roof he experienced gratitude which he felt to be sincere, and affection in which he dared to confide; and, ultimately, he took up his abode with them, in a residence suited to their early prospects and his riches; for even the artless and unsuspecting can, without danger, associate and sojourn with those whose thoughts and actions are under the guidance of religious principle, and who live in this world as if they every hour expected to be summoned away to the judgment of a world to come.

## CHAPTER X.

## LIES OF BENEVOLENCE.

IN a former chapter, I commented on those lies which are, at best, of a mixed nature, and are made up of worldly motives, of which fear and selfishness compose the principal part, although the utterer of them considers them as LIES OF BENEVOLENCE.

Lies of real benevolence are, like most other falsehoods, various in their species and degrees; but as they are, however in fact objectionable, the most amiable and respectable of all lies, and seem so like virtue that they may easily be taken for her children; and as the illustrations of them which I have been enabled to give, are so much more connected with our tenderest and most solemn feelings than those afforded by other lies, I thought it right that, like the principal figures in a procession, they should bring up the rear.

The lies which relations and friends generally think it their duty to tell an unconsciously dying person, are prompted by real benevolence, as are those which medical men deem themselves justified in uttering to a dying patient; though, if the person dying, or the surrounding friends, be strictly religious characters, they must be, on principle, desirous that the whole truth should be told.\*

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\* Richard Pearson, the distinguished author of the *Life of William Hey*, of Leeds, says, in that interesting

Methinks I hear some of my readers exclaim,  
Can any one suppose it a duty to run the risk of

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book, p. 261, "Mr. Hey's sacred respect for truth, and his regard for the welfare of his fellow-creatures, never permitted him intentionally to deceive his patients by flattering representations of their state of health, by assurances of the existence of no danger, when he conceived their situation to be hopeless, or even greatly hazardous." "The duty of a medical attendant," continues he, "in such delicate situations, has been a subject of considerable embarrassment to men of integrity and conscience, who view the uttering of a falsehood as a crime, and the practice of deceit as repugnant to the spirit of Christianity. That a sacrifice of truth may sometimes contribute to the comfort of a patient, and be medicinally beneficial, is not denied; but that a wilful and deliberate falsehood can, in any case, be justifiable before God, is a maxim not to be lightly admitted. The question may be stated thus: Is it justifiable for a man deliberately to violate a moral precept of the law of God, *from a motive of prudence and humanity*? If this be *affirmed*, it must be admitted that it would be no less justifiable to infringe the laws of his country from similar motives; and, consequently, it would be an act of injustice to punish him for such a transgression. But will it be contended that the Divine, or even the human legislature must be subjected to the control of this sort of casuistry? If falsehood, under these circumstances, be no crime, then, as no detriment can result from uttering it, very little merit can be attached to so light a sacrifice; whereas, if it were presumed that some guilt were incurred, and that the physician voluntarily exposed himself to the danger of future suffering, for the sake of procuring temporary benefit to his patient, he would have a high claim upon the gratitude of those who derived the advantage. But is it quite clear that pure benevolence commonly suggests the deviation from truth, and that neither the low consideration of concil-

killing friends or relations, by telling the whole truth: that is, informing them that they are

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iating favor, nor the view of escaping censure and promoting his own interest, has any share in prompting him to adopt the measure he defends? To assist in this inquiry, let a man ask himself whether he carries this caution, and shows this kindness, indiscriminately on all occasions; being as fearful of giving pain, by exciting apprehension in the mind of the poor, as of the rich; of the meanest, as of the most elevated rank. Suppose it can be shown that these humane falsehoods are distributed promiscuously, it may be inquired further, whether, if such a proceeding were a manifest breach of a municipal law, exposing the delinquent to suffer a very inconvenient and serious punishment, a medical adviser would feel himself obliged to expose his person or his estate to penal consequences, whenever the circumstances of his patient should seem to require the intervention of a falsehood. It may be presumed, without any breach of charity, that a demur would frequently, perhaps generally, be interposed on the occasion of such a requisition. But, surely, the laws of the Moral Governor of the universe are not to be esteemed less sacred, and a transgression of them less important in its consequences, than the violation of a civil statute; nor ought the fear of God to be less powerful in deterring men from the committing of a crime, than the fear of a magistrate. Those who contend for the necessity of violating truth, that they may benefit their patients, place themselves between two conflicting rules of morality: their obligation to obey the command of God, and their presumed duty to their neighbor; or, in other words, they are supposed to be brought by the Divine Providence into this distressing alternative of necessarily sinning against God, or injuring their fellow-creatures. When a moral and a positive duty stand opposed to each other, the Holy Scriptures have determined that obedience to the former is to be preserved, before compliance with the latter."



dying ! But if the patients be not really dying, or in danger, no risk is incurred ; and if they be near death, which is it of most importance to consider—their momentary quiet here, or their interests hereafter ? Besides, many of those persons who would think that, for spiritual reasons merely, a disclosure of the truth was improper, and who declare that, on *such occasions*, falsehood is *virtue*, and concealment humanity, would hold a different language, and act differently, were the unconsciously dying person one who was known *not to have made a will*, and who had *considerable property to dispose of*. Then, consideration for their own temporal interests, or for those of others, would probably make them advise or adopt a contrary proceeding. Yet who that seriously reflects can, for a moment, put worldly interests in any comparison with those of a spiritual nature ? But, perhaps, an undue preference of worldly over spiritual interests might not be the leading motive to tell the truth in the one case, and withhold it in the other. The persons in question would probably be influenced by the conviction, satisfactory to them, but awfully erroneous in my apprehension, that a death-bed repentance, and death-bed supplication, must be wholly unavailing for the soul of the departing : that as the sufferer's work, for himself, is wholly done, and his fate fixed for time and for eternity, it were needless cruelty to let him know his end was approaching ; but that as his work for *others* is not done, if he has not made a testamentary

disposal of his property, it is a duty to urge him to make a will, even at all risk to himself.

My own opinion, which I give with great humility, is, that the truth is never to be violated or withheld in order to deceive; but I know myself to be in such a painful minority on this subject, that I almost doubt the correctness of my own judgment.

I am inclined to think that lies of benevolence are more frequently passive than active—are more frequently instanced in withholding and concealing the truth, than in direct spontaneous lying. There is one instance of withholding and concealing the truth from motives of mistaken benevolence, which is so common, and so pernicious, that I feel it particularly necessary to hold it up to severe reprehension. It is withholding or speaking only half the truth in giving the character of a servant.

Many persons, from reluctance to injure the interests even of very unworthy servants, never give the whole character unless it be required of them; and then, rather than tell a positive lie, they disclose the whole truth. But are they not lying, that is, are they not meaning to *deceive*, when they *withhold* the truth?

When I speak to ladies and gentlemen respecting the character of a servant, I of course conclude that I am speaking to honorable persons. I therefore expect that they should give me a correct character of the domestic in question; and should I omit to ask whether he or she be honest or

sober, I require that information on these points should be given me unreservedly. They must leave me to judge whether I will run the risk of hiring a drunkard, a thief, or a servant otherwise ill-disposed; but they would be dishonorable if they betrayed me into receiving into my family, to the risk of my domestic peace, or my property, those who are addicted to dishonest practices, or are otherwise of immoral habits. Besides, what an erroneous and bounded benevolence this conduct exhibits! If it be benevolent toward the servant whom I hire, it is *malevolent* toward *me*, and unjust also. True Christian kindness is just and impartial in its dealings, and never serves even a friend at the expense of a third person. But the masters and mistresses who thus do what they call a benevolent action, at the sacrifice of truth and integrity, often, no doubt, find their sin visited on their own heads; for they are not likely to have trustworthy servants. If servants know that, owing to the sinful kindness and lax morality of their employers, their faults will not receive their proper punishment—that of disclosure—when they are turned away, one of the most powerful motives to behave well is removed; for these are not likely to abstain from sin who are sure that they shall sin with impunity. Thus, then, the master or mistress who, in mistaken kindness, conceals the faults of a single servant, leads the rest of the household into the temptation of sinning also; and what is fancied to be benevolent to one, becomes, in its consequences, injurious to many. But let us now see what is

the probable effect on the servants so screened and befriended? They are instantly exposed, by this withholding of the truth, to the perils of temptation. Nothing, perhaps, can be more beneficial to culprits, of all descriptions, than to be allowed to take the *immediate* consequences of their offences, provided those consequences stop short of death, that most awful of punishments, because it cuts the offender off from all means of amendment; therefore it were better for the interests of servants, in every point of view, to let them abide by the certainty of not getting a new place, because they cannot have a character from their last: by these means the humane wish to punish in order to *save* would be gratified, and consequently, if the truth were always told on occasions of this nature, the feelings of REAL BENEVOLENCE would, in the end, be gratified. But if good characters are given with servants, or incomplete characters; that is, if their good qualities are mentioned, and their bad withheld, the consequences to the beings so mistakenly befriended may be of the most fatal nature; for if *ignorant* of their besetting sin, the head of the family cannot guard against it, but, unconsciously, may every hour put temptations in their way; while, on the contrary, had they been made acquainted with that besetting sin, they would have taken care never to have risked its being called into action.

But who, it may be asked, would hire servants, knowing that they had any “besetting sins?”

I trust that there are many who would do this, from the pious and benevolent motive of saving

them from further destruction, especially if penitence had been satisfactorily manifested.

I will now endeavor to illustrate some of my positions by the following story.

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### MISTAKEN KINDNESS.

ANN BELSON had lived in a respectable merchant's family, of the name of Melbourne, for many years, and had acquitted herself to the satisfaction of her employers in the successive capacities of nurse, house-maid, and lady's-maid. But it was at length discovered that she had long been addicted to petty pilfering; and, being emboldened by past impunity, she purloined some valuable lace, and was detected; but her kind master and mistress could not prevail on themselves to give up the tender nurse of their children to the just rigor of the law, and as their children themselves could not bear to have "poor Ann sent to jail," they resolved to punish her in no other manner than by turning her away *without a character*, as the common phrase is. But without a character she could not procure another service, and might be thus consigned to misery and ruin. This idea was insupportable! However she might deserve punishment, they shrank from inflicting it; and they resolved to keep Ann Belson themselves, as they could not recommend her conscientiously to any one else. This was a truly

benevolent action ; because, if she continued to sin, they alone were exposed to suffer from her fault. But they virtuously resolved to put no further temptation in her way, and to guard her against herself, by unremitting vigilance.

During the four succeeding years, Ann Belson's honesty was so entirely without a stain, that her benevolent friends were convinced that her penitence was sincere, and congratulated themselves that they had treated her with such lenity.

At this period the pressure of the times, and losses in trade, produced a change in the circumstances of the Melbournes ; and retrenchment became necessary. They therefore felt it right to discharge some of their servants, and particularly the lady's-maid.

The grateful Ann would not hear of this dismissal. She insisted on remaining on any terms, and in any situation ; nay, she declared her willingness to live with her indulgent friends for nothing ; but as they were too generous to accept her services at so great a disadvantage to herself, especially as she had poor relations to maintain, they resolved to procure her a situation ; and having heard of a very advantageous one, for which she was admirably calculated, they insisted on her trying to procure it.

"But what shall we do, my dear," said the wife to the husband, "concerning Ann's character ? Must we tell the whole truth ? As she has been uniformly honest during the last four years, should we not be justified in concealing her fault ?"  
"Yes : I think, at least I hope so," replied he.



“Still, as she was dishonest more years than she has now been honest, I really—I—it is a very puzzling question, Charlotte; and I am but a weak casuist.” A strong Christian might not have felt the point so difficult. But the Melbournes had not studied serious things deeply; and the result of the consultation was, that Ann Belson’s past faults should be concealed, if possible.

And possible it was. Lady Baryton, the young and noble bride who wished to hire her, was a thoughtless, careless woman of fashion; and as she learned that Ann could make dresses, and dress hair to admiration, she made few other inquiries; and Ann was installed in her new place.

It was, alas! the most improper of places, even for a sincere penitent, like Ann Belson; for it was a place of the most dangerous trust. Jewels, laces, ornaments of all kinds, were not only continually exposed to her eyes, but placed under her special care. Not those alone. When her lady returned home from a run of good luck at loo, a reticule, containing bank-notes and sovereigns, was emptied into an unlocked drawer; and Ann was told how fortunate her lady had been. The first time that this heedless woman acted thus, the poor Ann begged she would lock up her money. “Not I: it is too much trouble, and why should I?” “Because, my lady, it is not right to leave money about: it may be stolen.” “Nonsense! who should steal it? I know you must be honest; the Melbournes gave you such a high character.” Here Ann turned away in agony and

confusion. "But, my lady, the other servants," she resumed in a faint voice. "Pray, what business have the other servants at my drawers? However, do you lock up the drawer, and keep the key." "No: keep it *yourself*, my lady." "What, I go about with keys, like a housekeeper? Take it, I say!" Then flinging the key down, she went singing out of the room, little thinking to what peril, temporal and spiritual, she was exposing a hapless fellow-creature.

For some minutes after this *new danger* had opened upon her, Ann sat leaning on her hands, absorbed in painful meditation, and communing seriously with her own heart; nay, she even prayed for a few moments to be delivered from evil; but the next minute she was ashamed of her own self-distrust, and tried to resume her business with her usual alacrity.

A few evenings afterward, her lady brought her reticule home, and gave it to Ann, filled as before. "I conclude, my lady, you know how much money is in this purse?" "I did know; but I have forgotten." "Then let me tell it." "No, no: nonsense!" she replied, as she left the room: "lock it up, and then it will be safe, you know, as I can trust you." Ann sighed deeply, but repeated within herself, "Yes, yes: I am certainly now to be trusted;" but, as she said this, she saw two sovereigns on the carpet, which she had dropped out of the reticule in emptying it, and had locked the drawer without perceiving. Ann felt fluttered when she discovered them; but, taking them up, resolutely felt for the key

to add them to the others ; but the image of her recently widowed sister, and her large destitute family, rose before her, and she thought she would *not return* them, but ask her lady to give them to the poor widow. But then, her lady had already been very bountiful to her, and she would not ask her ; however, she would consider the matter, and it seemed as if it was *intended* she should have the sovereigns ; for they were separated from the rest, *as if for her*. Alas ! it would have been safer for her to believe that they were left there as a *snare* to try her penitence and her faith ; but she took a different view of it : she picked up the gold, then laid it down ; and long and severe was the conflict in her heart between good and evil.

We weep over the woes of romance ; we shed well-motivated tears over the sorrows of real life ; but where is the fiction, however highly wrought, and where the sorrows, however acute, that can deserve our pity and our sympathy so strongly, as the *agony* and conflicts of a *penitent yet tempted* soul !—of a soul that has turned to virtue, but is forcibly pulled back again to vice,—that knows its own danger, without power to hurry from it ; till, fascinated by the glittering bait, as the bird by the rattlesnake, it yields to its fatal allurements, regardless of consequences ! It was not without many a heartache, many a struggle, that Ann Belson gave way to the temptation, and put the gold in her pocket ; and when she had done so, she was told her sister was ill, and had sent to beg she would come to her, late as it was. Accord-

ingly, when her lady was in bed, she obtained leave to go to her; and while she relieved her sister's wants with the two purloined sovereigns, the poor thing almost fancied that she had done a good action! O! never is sin so dangerous as when it has allured us in the shape of a deed of benevolence. It had so allured the Melbournes when they concealed Ann's faults from Lady Baryton; and its bitter fruits were only too fast preparing.

"*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute,*" says the proverb; or, "The first step is the only difficult one." The next time her lady brought her winnings to her, Ann pursued a new plan: she insisted on telling the money over; but took care to make it less than it was, by two or three pounds. Not long after, she told Lady Baryton that she must have a new lock put on the drawer that held the money, as she had certainly dropped the key *somewhere*; and that, before she missed it, some one, she was sure, had been trying at the lock; for it was evidently hampered the last time she unlocked it. "Well, then, get a new lock," replied her careless mistress; "however, let the drawer be forced now; and then we had better tell over the money." The drawer was forced: they told the money; and even Lady Baryton was conscious that some of it was missing. But the *missing key*, and *hampered lock*, exonerated Ann from suspicion; especially as Ann owned that she had *discovered* the loss before; and declared that, had not her lady insisted on telling over the money, she had intended to replace it

gradually, because she felt herself responsible : while Lady Baryton, satisfied and deceived, recommended her to be on the watch for the thief ; and soon forgot the whole circumstance.

Lady Baryton thought herself, and perhaps she was, a woman of feeling. She never read the Old Bailey convictions without mourning over the prisoners condemned to death ; and never read an account of an execution without shuddering. Still, from want of reflection, and a high-principled sense of what we owe to others, especially to those who are the members of our own household, she never for one moment troubled herself to remember that she was daily throwing temptations in the way of a servant to commit the very faults which led those convicts, whom she pitied, to the fate which she deplored. Alas ! what have those persons to answer for, in every situation of life, who consider their dependents and servants merely as such, without remembering that they are, like themselves, heirs of the invisible world to come ; and that, if they take no pains to enlighten their minds, in order to *save* their immortal souls, they should, at least, be careful never to *endanger* them.

In a few weeks after the dialogue given above, Lady Baryton bought some strings of pearls at an India sale ; and having, on her way thence, shown them to her jeweller, that he might count them, and see if there were enough to make a pair of bracelets, she brought them home, because she could not yet afford proper clasps to fasten them ; and these were committed to Ann's care. But as

Lord Baryton, the next week, gave his lady a pair of diamond clasps, she sent the pearls to be made up immediately. In the evening, however, the jeweller came to tell her that there were two strings less than when she brought them before. "Then they must have been stolen!" she exclaimed; "and now I remember that Belson told me she was sure there was a thief in the house." "Are you sure," said Lord Baryton, "that Belson is not the thief herself?" "Impossible! I had such a character of her! and I have trusted her implicitly!" "It is not right to tempt even the most honest," replied Lord Baryton; "but we must have strict search made; and all the servants must be examined."

They were so; but as Ann Belson was not a hardened offender, she soon betrayed herself by her evident misery and terror; and was committed to prison on her own *full confession*; but she could not help exclaiming, in the agony of her heart, "O, my lady! remember that I conjured you not to trust me!" and Lady Baryton's heart reproached her, at least for *some hours*. There were other hearts also that experienced self-reproach, and of a far longer duration; for the Melbournes, when they heard what had happened, saw that the seeming benevolence of their concealment had been a real injury, and had ruined her whom they meant to save. They saw that, had they told Lady Baryton the truth, that lady would either not have hired her, in spite of her skill, or she would have taken care not to put her in situations calculated to tempt her



cupidity. But neither Lady Baryton's regrets nor self-reproach, nor the greater agonies of the *Melbournes*, could alter or avert the course of justice; and Ann Belson was condemned to death. She was, however, strongly recommended to mercy, both by the jury and the noble prosecutor; and her conduct in prison was so exemplary, so indicative of the deep contrition of a trembling, humble Christian, that, at length, the intercession was not in vain; and the *Melbournes* had the comfort of carrying to her what was to them, at least, joyful news; namely, that her sentence was commuted to transportation.

Yet even this mercy was a severe trial to the self-judged *Melbournes*; since they had the misery of seeing the affectionate nurse of their children, the being endeared to them by many years of active services, torn from all the tender ties of existence, and exiled for life as a felon to a distant land! exiled too for a crime which, had they performed their SOCIAL DUTY, she might never have committed. But the pain of mind which they endured on this lamentable occasion was not thrown away on them, as it awakened them to serious reflection: they learned to remember, and to teach their children to remember, the holy command, "that we are not to do evil that good may come;" and that no deviation from truth and ingenuousness can be justified, even if it claims for itself the plausible title of the active or *passive* LIE OF BENEVOLENCE.

There is another species of withholding the truth, which springs from so amiable a source,

and is so often practiced even by pious Christians, that, while I venture to say it is at variance with reliance on the wisdom and mercy of the Creator, I do so with reluctant awe. I mean a *concealment* of the whole extent of a calamity from the persons afflicted, lest the blow should fall too heavily upon them.

I would ask, whether such conduct be not inconsistent with the belief that trials are *mercies* in disguise?—that the Almighty “loveth those whom he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son that he receiveth?”

If this assurance be true, we set our own judgment against that of the Deity, by concealing from the sufferer the extent of the trial inflicted; and seem to believe ourselves more capable than he is to determine the quantity of suffering that is good for the person so visited; and we set up our *finite* against *infinite* wisdom.

There are other reasons, besides religious ones, why this sort of deceit should no more be practiced than any other.

The motive for withholding the whole truth, on these occasions, is *to do good*. But will the desired good be effected by this opposition to the Creator’s revealed will toward the sufferer? Is it certain that good will be performed at all, or that concealment is necessary?

What is the reason given for concealing half the truth? Fear lest the whole would be more than the sufferer could bear; which implies that it is already mighty, to an awful degree. Then, surely, a degree more of suffering, at such a mo-

ment, cannot possess much added power to destroy; and if the trial be allowed to come in its full force, the mind of the victim will make exactly the same efforts as minds always do when oppressed by misery. A state of heavy affliction is so repulsive to the feelings, that even in the first paroxysms of it we all make efforts to get away from under its weight; and, in proof of this assertion, I ask, whether we do not always find the afflicted less cast down than we expected? The religious pray as well as weep: the merely moral look around for consolation here; and, as a dog, when cast into the sea, as soon as he rises and regains his breath, strikes out his feet, in order to float securely upon the waves; so, be their sorrows great or small, all persons instantly strive to find support somewhere; and they do find it, while in proportion to the depth of the affliction is often the subsequent rebound.

I could point out instances (but I shall leave my readers to imagine them) in which, by concealing from the bereaved sufferers the most affecting part of the truth, we stand between them and the balm derived from that very incident which was mercifully intended to heal their wounds.

I also object to such concealment; because it entails upon those who are guilty of it a series of falsehoods—falsehoods, too, which are often fruitlessly uttered; since the object of them is apt to suspect deceit, and endure that restless, agonizing suspicion, which those who have ever

experienced it could never inflict on the objects of their love.

Besides, religion and reason enable us, in time, to bear the calamity of which we *know* the extent; but we are always on the watch to find out that which we only *suspect*; and the mind's strength, frittered away in vain and varied conjectures, runs the risk of sinking beneath the force of its own indistinct fears.

Confidence, too, in those dear friends whom we trusted before, is liable to be entirely destroyed; and, in *all its bearings*, this *well-intentioned* departure from truth is pregnant with mischief.

*Lastly*, I object to such concealment, from a conviction that its continuance is IMPOSSIBLE; for, some time or other, the whole truth is revealed, at a moment when the sufferers are not so well able to bear it as they were in the first paroxysms of grief.

In this, my next and last tale, I give another illustration of those amiable but pernicious lies, the LIES OF REAL BENEVOLENCE.

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## THE FATHER AND SON.

“WELL, then, thou art willing that Edgar should go to a public school,” said the vicar of a small parish in Westmoreland to his weep-

ing wife. "Quite willing." "And yet thou art in tears, Susan." "I weep for his faults; and not because he is to quit us. I grieve to think he is so disobedient and unruly that we can manage him at home no longer. And yet I loved him so dearly! so much more than——" Here her sobs redoubled; and, as Vernon rested her aching head on his bosom, he said, in a low voice, "Ay; and so did I love him, even better than our other children; and therefore, probably, our injustice is thus visited. But he is so clever! He learned more Latin in a week than his brothers in a month!" "And he is so *beautiful*!" observed his mother. "And so generous!" rejoined his father: "but cheer up, my beloved; under stricter discipline than ours he may yet do well, and turn out all we could wish." "I hope, however," replied the fond mother, "that his master will not be very severe; and I will try to look forward." As she said this, she left her husband with something like comfort, for a tender mother's hopes for a darling child are easily revived; and she went, with recovered calmness, to get her son's wardrobe ready against the day of his departure. The equally affectionate father meanwhile called his son into the study, to prepare his mind for that parting which his undutiful conduct had made unavoidable.

But Vernon found that Edgar's mind required no preparation: that the idea of change was delightful to his volatile nature; and that he panted to distinguish himself on a wider field of action than a small retired village afforded to

his daring, restless spirit; while his father saw with agony, which he could but ill conceal, that this desire of entering into a new situation had power to annihilate all regret at leaving the tenderest of parents, and the companions of his childhood.

However, his feelings were a little soothed when the parting hour arrived; for then the heart of Edgar was so melted within him at the sight of his mother's tears, and his father's agony, that he uttered words of tender contrition, such as they had never heard from him before: the recollection of which spoke comfort to their minds when they beheld him no longer.

But short were the hopes which that parting hour had excited. In a few months the master of the school wrote to complain of the insubordination of his new pupil. In his next letter he declared that he should soon be under the necessity of expelling him; and Edgar had not been at school six months, before he prevented the threatened expulsion, only by running away, no one knew whither! Nor was he heard of by his family for four years; during which time, not even the dutiful affection of their other sons, nor their success in life, had power to heal the breaking heart of the mother, nor cheer the depressed spirits of the father. At length the prodigal returned, ill, meagre, penniless, and penitent; and was received and forgiven. "But where hast thou been, my child, this long, long time?" said his mother, tenderly weeping, as she gazed on his pale, sunken cheek. "Ask me no



questions ! I am here : that is enough," Edgar Vernon replied, shuddering as he spoke. "It is enough !" cried his mother, throwing herself on his neck ! "For this, my son, was dead, and is alive again : was lost, and is found !" But the father felt and thought differently : he knew that it was his duty to interrogate his son ; and he resolved to insist on knowing where and how those long four years had been passed. He, however, delayed his questions till Edgar's health was reëstablished ; but when that time arrived, he told him that he expected to know all that had befallen him since he ran away from school. "Spare me till to-morrow," said Edgar Vernon, "and then you shall know all." His father acquiesced ; but the next morning Edgar had disappeared, leaving the following letter behind him :

"I cannot, dare not tell you what a wretch I have been ! though I own your right to demand such a confession from me. Therefore, I must become a wanderer again ! Pray for me, dearest and tenderest of mothers ! Pray for me, best of fathers and of men ! I dare not pray for myself, for I am a vile and wretched sinner, though your grateful and affectionate son, E. V."

Though this letter nearly drove the mother to distraction, it contained for the father a degree of soothing comfort. She dwelt only on the conviction which it held out to her, that she should probably never behold her son again ; but *he* dwelt with pious thankfulness on the sense of his guilt, expressed by the unhappy writer ; trusting that the sinner who knows and

owns himself to be "vile," may, when it is least expected of him, repent and amend.

How had those four years been passed by Edgar Vernon—that important period of a boy's life, the years from fourteen to eighteen? Suffice it that, under a feigned name, in order that he might not be traced, he had entered on board a merchant-ship: that he had left it after he had made one voyage: that he was taken into the service of what is called a *sporting character*, whom he had met on board ship, who saw that Edgar had talents and spirit which he might render serviceable to his own pursuits. This man, finding he was the son of a gentleman, treated him as such, and initiated him gradually into the various arts of gambling, and the vices of the metropolis; but one night they were both surprised by the officers of justice at a noted gaming-house; and, after a desperate scuffle, Edgar escaped wounded, and nearly killed, to a house in the suburbs. There he remained till he was safe from pursuit, and then, believing himself in danger of dying, he longed for the comfort of his paternal roof; he also longed for paternal forgiveness; and the prodigal returned to his forgiving parents.

But as this was a tale which Edgar might well shrink from relating to a pure and pious father, flight was far easier than such a confession. Still, "so deceitful is the human heart, and desperately wicked," that-I believe Edgar was beginning to feel the monotony of his life at home, and therefore was glad of an excuse to

justify to himself his desire to escape into scenes more congenial to his habits, and now perverted nature. His father, however, continued to hope for his reformation, and was therefore little prepared for the next intelligence of his son, which reached him through a private channel. A friend wrote to inform him that Edgar was taken up for having passed forged notes, knowing them to be forgeries; that he would soon be fully committed to prison for trial; and would be tried with his accomplices at the ensuing assizes for Middlesex.

At first, even the firmness of Vernon yielded to the stroke, and he was bowed low to the earth. But the confiding Christian struggled against the sorrows of the suffering father, and overcame them; till, at last, he was able to exclaim, "I will go to him! I will be near him at his trial! I will be near him even at his death, if death be his portion! And no doubt I shall be able to awaken him to a sense of his guilt. Yes, I may be permitted to see him expire contrite before God and man, and calling on His name who is able to save to the uttermost!" But, just as he was setting off for Middlesex, his wife, who had long been declining, was, to all appearance, so much worse, that he could not leave her. She having had suspicions that all was not right with Edgar, contrived to discover the TRUTH, which had been *kindly*, but erroneously, concealed from her, and had sunk under the sudden, *unmitigated* blow; and the welcome intelligence, that the *prosecutor had withdrawn the charge*,

came at a moment when the sorrows of the bereaved husband had closed the father's heart against the voice of gladness.

"This news came too late to save the poor victim!" he exclaimed, as he knelt beside the corpse of her whom he had loved so long and so tenderly; "and I feel that I cannot, cannot *yet* rejoice in it as I ought." But he soon repented of this ungrateful return for the mercy of Heaven; and, even before the body was consigned to the grave, he thankfully acknowledged that the liberation of his son was a ray amidst the gloom that surrounded him.

Meanwhile, Edgar Vernon, when unexpectedly liberated from what he knew to be certain danger to his life, resolved, on the ground of having been falsely taken up, and as an innocent, injured man, to visit his parents; for he had heard of his mother's illness; and his heart yearned to behold her once more. But it was only in the dark hour that he dared venture to approach his home; and it was his intention to discover himself at first to his mother only.

Accordingly, the gray parsonage was scarcely visible in the shadows of twilight, when he reached the gate that led to the back door; at which he gently knocked, but in vain. No one answered his knock: all was still within and around. What could this mean? He then walked round the house, and looked in at the window: all there was dark and quiet as the grave; but the church-bell was tolling, while, alarmed, awed, and overpowered, he leaned

against the gate. At this moment he saw two men rapidly pass along the road, saying, "I fear we shall be too late for the funeral! I wonder how the poor old man will bear it? for he loved his wife dearly!" "Ay; and so he did that wicked boy who has been the death of her," replied the other.

These words shot like an arrow through the not yet callous heart of Edgar Vernon, and, throwing himself on the ground, he groaned aloud in his agony; but the next minute, with the speed of desperation, he ran toward the church, and reached it just as the service was over, the mourners departing, and as his father was borne away, nearly insensible, on the arms of his *virtuous* sons.

At such a moment, Edgar was able to enter the church unheeded; for all eyes were on his afflicted parent; and the self-convicted culprit dared not force himself, at a time like that, on the notice of the father whom he had so grievously injured. But his poor bursting heart felt that it must vent its agony, or break; and, ere the coffin was lowered into the vault, he rushed forward, and, throwing himself across it, called upon his mother's name, in an accent so piteous and appalling, that the assistants, though they did not recognize him at first, were unable to drive him away; so awed, so affected, were they by the agony which they witnessed.

At length he rose up and endeavored to speak, but in vain: then, holding his clenched fists to his forehead, he screamed out, "Heaven preserve

my senses!" and rushed from the church with all the speed of desperation. But whither should he turn those desperate steps? He longed, earnestly longed, to go and humble himself before his father, and implore that pardon for which his agonized soul pined. But alas! earthly pride forbade him to indulge the salutary feeling; for he knew his worthy, unoffending brothers were in the house, and he could not endure the mortification of encountering those whose virtues must be put in comparison with his vices. He therefore cast one long lingering look at the abode of his childhood, and fled for ever from the house of mourning, humiliation, and safety.

In a few days, however, he wrote to his father, detailing his reasons for visiting home, and all the agonies which he had experienced during his short stay. Full of consolation was this letter to that bereaved and mourning heart! for to him it seemed the language of contrition; and he lamented that his beloved wife was not alive, to share in the hope which it gave him. "Would that he had come, or would *now* come to me!" he exclaimed; but the letter had no date; and he knew not whither to send an invitation. But *where* was he, and *what* was he, at that period? In gambling-houses, at cock-fights, sparring-matches, fairs, and in every scene where profligacy prevailed the most; while at all these places he had a preëminence in skill, which endeared these pursuits to him, and made his occasional contrition powerless to influence him to amendment of life. He therefore continued to disregard the



warning voice within him; till at length it was no longer heeded.

One night, when on his way to Y——, where races were to succeed the assizes, which had just commenced, he stopped at an inn, to refresh his horse; and being hot with riding, and depressed by some recent losses at play, he drank very freely of the spirits which he had ordered. At this moment he saw a schoolfellow of his in the bar, who, like himself, was on his way to Y——. This young man was of a coarse, unfeeling nature; and, having had a fortune left him, was full of the consequence of newly-acquired wealth.

Therefore, when Edgar Vernon impulsively approached him, and, putting his hand out, asked how he did, Dunham haughtily drew back, put his hands behind him, and, in the hearing of several persons, replied, "I do not know you, sir!" "Not *know* me, Dunham?" cried Edgar Vernon, turning very pale. "That is to say, I do not *choose* to know you." "And why not?" cried Edgar, seizing his arm, and with a look of menace. "Because — because — I do not choose to know a man who murdered his mother." "Murdered his mother!" cried the bystanders, holding up their hands, and regarding Edgar Vernon with a look of horror. "Wretch!" cried he, seizing Dunham in his powerful grasp, "explain yourself this moment, or——" "Then take your fingers from my throat!" Edgar did so; and Dunham said, "I meant only that you broke your mother's heart by your ill conduct; and pray, was not that murdering her?" While

he was saying this, Edgar Vernon stood with folded arms, rolling his eyes wildly from one of the bystanders to the other; and seeing, as he believed, disgust toward him in the countenances of them all. When Dunham had finished speaking, Edgar Vernon wrung his hands in agony, saying, "True, most true, I am a murderer! I am a parricide!" Then, suddenly drinking off a large glass of brandy near him, he quitted the room, and, mounting his horse, rode off at full speed. Aim and object in view he had *none*: he was only trying to ride from himself: trying to escape from those looks of horror and aversion which the remark of Dunham had provoked. But what right had Dunham so to provoke him?

After he had put this question to himself, the image of Dunham, scornfully rejecting him his hand, alone took possession of his remembrance, till he thirsted for revenge; and the irritation of the moment urged him to seek it immediately.

The opportunity, as he rightly suspected, was in his power: Dunham would soon be coming that way on his road to Y——; and he would meet him. He did so; and, riding up to him, seized the bridle of his horse, exclaiming, "You have called me a murderer, Dunham; and you were right; for, though I loved my mother dearly, and would have died for her, I killed her by my wicked course of life!" "Well, well: I know *that*," replied Dunham, "so let me go! for I tell you I do not like to be seen with such as you. Let me go, I say!"

He *did* let him go; but it was as the tiger lets go its prey, to spring on it again. A blow from Edgar's nervous arm knocked the rash insulter from his horse. In another minute, Dunham lay on the road a bleeding corpse; and the next morning, officers were out in pursuit of the murderer. That wretched man was soon found, and soon secured. Indeed, he had not desired to *avoid* pursuit; but, when the irritation of drunkenness and revenge had subsided, the agony of remorse took possession of his soul; and he confessed his crime with tears of the bitterest penitence. To be brief: Edgar Vernon was carried into that city as a manacled criminal, which he had expected to leave as a successful gambler; and, before the end of the assizes, he was condemned to death.

He made a full confession of his guilt before the judge pronounced condemnation: gave a brief statement of the provocation which he received from the deceased; blaming himself at the same time for his criminal revenge, in so heartrending a manner, and lamenting so pathetically the disgrace and misery in which he had involved his father and family, that every heart was melted to compassion; and the judge wept, while he passed on him the awful sentence of the law.

His conduct in prison was so exemplary, that it proved he had not forgotten his father's precepts, though he had not acted upon them; and his brothers, for whom he sent, found him in a state of mind which afforded them the only and best consolation. This contrite, lowly, Christian state of mind accompanied him to the awful end

of his existence; and it might be justly said of him, that "nothing in his life became him like the losing it."

Painful, indeed, was the anxiety of Edgar and his brothers, lest their father should learn this horrible circumstance; but as the culprit was arraigned under a feigned name, and as the crime, trial, and execution had taken and would take up so short a period of time, they flattered themselves that he never would learn how and where Edgar died, but would implicitly believe what was told him. They therefore wrote him word that Edgar had been taken ill at an inn, near London, on his *road home*; that he had sent for them; and they had little hopes of his recovery. They followed this letter of BENEVOLENT LIES as soon as they could, to inform him that all was over.

This plan was wholly disapproved by a friend of the family, who, on principle, thought all concealment wrong; and, probably, useless too.

When the brothers drove to his house, on their way home, he said to them, "I found your father in a state of deep submission to the Divine will, though grieved at the loss of a child, whom not even his errors could drive from his affections. I also found him consoled by those expressions of filial love and reliance on the merits of his Redeemer, which you transmitted to him from Edgar himself. Now, as the poor youth died penitent, and as his crime was palliated by great provocation, I conceive that it would not add much to your father's distress were he to be informed

of the truth. You know that, from a principle of obedience to the implied designs of Providence, I object to any concealment on such occasions; but on this, disclosure would certainly be a *safer*, as well as a more *proper*, mode of proceeding; for, though he does not read newspapers, he may one day learn the fact as it is; and then the consequence may be fatal to life or reason. Remember how ill concealment answered in your poor mother's case." But he argued in vain. However, he obtained leave to go with them to their father, that he might judge of the possibility of making the disclosure which he advised.

They found the poor old man leaning his head upon an open Bible, as though he had been praying over it. The sight of his sons in mourning told the tale which he dreaded to hear; and, wringing their hands in silence, he left the room, but soon returned; and, with surprising composure, said, "Well: now I can bear to hear particulars." When they had told him all they chose to relate, he exclaimed, melting into tears, "Enough! O, my dear sons and dear friend, it is a sad and grievous thing for a father to own; but I feel this sorrow to be a blessing! I had always feared that he would die a violent death, either by his own hand, or that of the executioner; (here the sons looked triumphantly at each other;) therefore, his dying a penitent, and with humble Christian reliance, is *such a relief to my mind!* Yes: I feared he might commit forgery, or even murder; and that would have been dreadful!" "Dreadful, indeed!" faltered out both the brothers,

bursting into tears ; while Osborne, choked, and almost convinced, turned to the window. " Yet," added he, " even in that case, if he had died penitent, I trust that I could have borne the blow, and been able to believe the soul of my unhappy boy would find mercy !" Here Osborne eagerly turned round, and would have ventured to tell the truth, but was withheld by the frowns of his companions ; and the truth *was not told*.

Edgar had not been dead above seven months, before a visible change took place in his father's spirits, and expression of countenance ; for the constant dread of his child's coming to a terrible end had hitherto preyed upon his mind, and rendered his appearance haggard ; but now he looked and *was* cheerful ; therefore his sons rejoiced, whenever they visited him, that they had not taken Osborne's advice. " You are wrong," said he : " he would have been just as well, if he had known the manner of Edgar's death. It is not his *ignorance*, but the cessation of anxious suspense, that has thus renovated him. However, he may go in this ignorance to his grave ; and I earnestly hope he will do so." " Amen," said one of his sons : " for his life is most precious to our children, as well as to us. Our little boys are improving so fast under his tuition."

The consciousness of recovering health, as a painful affection of the breast and heart had greatly subsided since the death of Edgar, made the good old man wish to visit, during the summer months, an old college friend, who lived in Yorkshire ; and he communicated his intentions



to his sons. But they highly disapproved them, because, though Edgar's dreadful death was not likely to be revealed to him in the little village of R——, it might be disclosed to him by some one or other during a long journey.

However, as he was bent on going, they could not find a sufficient excuse for preventing it; but they took every precaution possible. They wrote to their father's intended host, desiring him to keep all papers and magazines for the last seven months out of his way; and when the day of his departure arrived, Osborne himself went to take a place for him; and took care it should be in that coach which did not stop at or go through York, in order to obviate all possible chance of his hearing the murder discussed. But it so happened, that a family, going from the town whence the coach started, wanted the whole of it; and, without leave, Vernon's place was transferred to the other coach, which went the very road which Osborne disapproved. "Well, well: it is the same thing to me," said the good old man, when he was informed of the change; and he set off, full of pious thankfulness for the affectionate conduct and regrets of his parishioners at the moment of his departure, as they lined the road along which the coach was to pass, and expressed even clamorously their wishes for his return.

The coach stopped at an inn outside the city of York; and as Vernon was not disposed to eat any dinner, he strolled along the road, till he came to a small church, pleasantly situated, and entered the churchyard, to read, as was his

custom, the inscriptions on the tombstones. While thus engaged, he saw a man filling up a new-made grave, and entered into conversation with him. He found it was the sexton himself; and he drew from him several anecdotes of the persons interred around them.

During this conversation, they had walked over the whole of the ground, when, just as they were going to leave the spot, the sexton stopped to pluck some weeds from a grave near the corner of it, and Vernon stopped also; taking hold, as he did so, of a small willow sapling, planted near the corner itself.

As the man rose from his occupation, and saw where Vernon stood, he smiled significantly, and said, "I planted that willow; and it is on a grave, though the grave is not marked out." "Indeed!" "Yes: it is the grave of a murderer." "Of a murderer!" echoed Vernon, instinctly shuddering, and moving away from it. "Yes," resumed he; "of a murderer who was hanged at York. Poor lad! it was very right that he should be hanged; but he was not a hardened villain! and he died so penitent! and, as I knew him when he used to visit where I was groom, I could not help planting this tree, for old acquaintance's sake." Here he drew his hand across his eyes. "Then he was not a low-born man." "O no, his father was a clergyman, I think." "Indeed! poor man: was he living at the time?" said Vernon, deeply sighing. "O yes; for his poor son did so fret, lest his father should ever know what he had done; for he said he was an angel upon earth;

and he could not bear to think how he would grieve; for, poor lad, he loved his father and his mother too, though he did so badly." "Is his mother living?" "No: if she was, he would have been alive; but his evil courses broke her heart; and it was because the man he killed reproached him for having murdered his mother, that he was provoked to murder him." "Poor, rash, mistaken youth! then he had provocation." "O yes, the greatest; but then he was very sorry for what he had done; and it would have broken your heart to hear him talk of his poor father." "I am glad I did not hear him," said Vernon, hastily, and in a faltering voice; (for he thought of Edgar.) "And yet, sir, it would have done your heart good too." "Then he had virtuous feelings, and loved his father amidst all his errors?" "Ay." "And I dare say his father loved him, in spite of his faults." "I dare say he did," replied the man; "for one's children are our own flesh and blood, you know, sir, after all that is said and done; and maybe this young fellow was spoiled in the bringing up." "Perhaps so," said Vernon, sighing deeply. "However, this poor lad made a very good end." "I am glad of that! and he lies here," continued Vernon, gazing on the spot with deepening interest, and moving nearer to it as he spoke. "Peace be to his soul! But was he not dissected?" "Yes; but his brothers got leave to have the body after dissection. They came to me; and we buried it privately at night." "His brothers came! and who were his brothers?" "Merchants in London;

and it was a sad cut on them ; but they took care that their father should not know it.” “No !” cried Vernon, turning sick at heart. “O no : they wrote *him* word that his son was ill ; then went to Westmoreland, and——” “Tell me,” interrupted Vernon, gasping for breath, and laying his hand on his arm, “tell me the name of this poor youth !” “Why, he was tried under a false name, for the sake of his family ; but his real name was Edgar Vernon.”

The agonized parent drew back, shuddered violently and repeatedly, casting up his eyes to heaven at the same time, with a look of mingled appeal and resignation. He then rushed to the obscure spot which covered the bones of his son, threw himself upon it and stretched his arms over it, as if embracing the unconscious deposit beneath, while his head rested on the grass, and he neither spoke nor moved. But he uttered one groan : then all was stillness !

His terrified and astonished companion remained motionless for a few moments ; then stooped to raise him ; but the FIAT OF MERCY had gone forth, and the paternal heart, broken by the sudden shock, had suffered and breathed its last.

## CHAPTER XI.

## LIES OF WANTONNESS, AND PRACTICAL LIES.

I COME now to LIES OF WANTONNESS: that is, lies told from no other motive but a love of lying, and to show the utterer's total contempt of truth, and for those scrupulous persons of their acquaintance who look on it with reverence, and endeavor to act up to their principles: lies having their origin merely in a depraved fondness for speaking and inventing falsehood. Not that persons of this description confine their falsehoods to this sort of lying: on the contrary, they lie after this fashion because they have exhausted the strongly-motived and more natural sorts of lying. In such as these, there is no more hope of amendment than there is for the man of intemperate habits, who has exhausted life of its pleasures, and his constitution of its energy. Such persons must go despised and (terrible state of human degradation!) untrusted, unbelieved, into their graves.

PRACTICAL LIES come last on my list: lies not UTTERED, but ACTED; and dress will furnish me with most of my illustrations.

It has been said that the great art of dress is to CONCEAL DEFECTS and HEIGHTEN BEAUTIES; therefore, as concealment is deception, this great art of dress is founded on falsehood; but cer-

tainly, in some instances, on falsehood *comparatively* of an innocent kind.

If the false hair be so worn that no one can fancy it natural: if the bloom on the cheek is such that it cannot be mistaken for nature; or if the person who "conceals defects and heightens beauties," openly avows the practice, then is the deception annihilated. But if the cheek be so artfully tinted that its hue is mistaken for natural color: if the false hair be so skilfully woven that it passes for natural hair: if the crooked person, or meagre form, be so cunningly assisted by dress, that the uneven shoulder disappears, and becoming fulness succeeds to unbecoming thinness, while the man or woman thus assisted by art expects their charm will be imputed to *nature* alone; then these aids of dress partake of the nature of other lying, and become equally vicious in the eyes of the religious and the moral.

I have said the *man* or woman so assisted by art; and I believe that by including the *stronger* sex in the above observation, I have only been *strictly just*.

While men hide baldness by gluing a piece of false hair on their heads, *meaning* that it should pass for their own, and while a false calf gives muscular beauty to a shapeless leg, can the observer of human life do otherwise than include the wiser sex in the list of those who indulge in the permitted artifices and mysteries of the toilet? Nay; bolder still are the advances of some men into its sacred mysteries. I have seen the eyebrows, even of the young, darkened by the hand



of art, and their cheeks reddened by its touch; and who has not seen in Bond street, or *the Drive*, during the last twenty or thirty years, certain notorious men of fashion glowing in immortal bloom, and rivalling the dashing belle beside them?

As the foregoing observations on the practical lies of dress have been mistaken by many, and have exposed me to severe, and, I think I may add, unjust animadversions, I take the opportunity afforded me by a second edition to say a few words in explanation of them.

I do not wish to censure any one for having recourse to art to hide the defects of nature; and I have *expressly said* that such practices are comparatively innocent; but it seems to me that they cease to be innocent, and become passive and practical lies also, if, when men and women hear the fineness of their complexion, hair, or teeth commended in their presence, they do not own that the beauty so commended is entirely artificial, provided such be really the case. But,

I am far from advising any one to be guilty of the unnecessary *egotism* of *volunteering* such an assurance: all I contend for is, that when we are praised for qualities, whether of mind or person, which we do not possess, we are guilty of *passive*, if not of *practical* lying, if we do not disclaim our right to the encomium bestowed.

The following also are PRACTICAL LIES of every day's experience.

Wearing paste for diamonds, intending that the false should be taken for the true; and purchasing

brooches, pins, and rings of mock jewels, intending that they should pass for real ones : passing off gooseberry-wine at dinner for real champagne, and English *liqueurs* for foreign ones. But, on these occasions, the motive is not always the mean and contemptible wish of imposing on the credulity of others ; but it has sometimes its source in a dangerous as well as deceptive ambition, *that of making an appearance beyond what the circumstances of the persons so deceiving really warrant ; the wish to be supposed to be more opulent than they really are ; that most common of all the practical lies ; as ruin and bankruptcy follow in its train.* The lady who purchases and wears paste, which she hopes will pass for diamonds, is usually one who has no right to wear jewels at all ; and the gentleman who passes off gooseberry-wine for champagne, is, in all probability, aiming at a style of living beyond his situation in society.\*

On some occasions, however, when ladies substitute paste for diamonds, the substitution tells a tale of greater error still. I mean when ladies wear mock for real jewels, because their extravagance has obliged them to raise money on the latter ; and they are therefore constrained to keep up the appearance of their necessary and accustomed splendor, by a PRACTICAL LIE.

The following is another of the PRACTICAL LIES in common use.

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\* The best way to avoid temptations to practice these deceptions, is to dispense with those beverages and jewels altogether.—[EDITOR.]

The medical man who desires his servant to call him out of church, or from a party, in order to give him the appearance of the great business which he has *not*, is guilty not of uttering, but of *acting* a falsehood; and the author, also, who makes his publisher put second and third editions before a work, of which, perhaps, not even the first edition is sold.

But the most fatal to the interests of others, though perhaps the most pitiable of practical lies, are those acted by men who, though they know themselves to be in the gulf of bankruptcy, either from wishing to put off the evil day, or from the visionary hope that something will occur unexpectedly to save them, launch out into increased splendor of living, in order to obtain further credit, and induce their acquaintances to intrust their money to them.

There is, however, one PRACTICAL LIE more fatal still, in my opinion, because it is the practice of schools, and consequently the sin of early life; a period of existence in which it is desirable, both for general and individual good, that habits of truth and integrity should be acquired, and strictly adhered to. I mean the pernicious custom which prevails amongst boys, and probably girls, of getting their schoolfellows to do their exercises for them, or consenting to do the same office for others.

Some will say, "But it would be so ill-natured to refuse to write one's schoolfellows' exercises, especially when one is convinced that they cannot write them for themselves." But, leaving the

question of truth and falsehood *unargued* awhile, let us examine coolly that of the probable good or evil done to the parties obliged.

What are children sent to school for? To learn. And when there, what are the motives which are to make them learn? Dread of punishment, and hope of distinction and reward. There are few children so stupid as not to be led on to industry by one or both of these motives, however indolent they may be; but if these motives be not allowed their proper scope of action, the stupid boy will never take the trouble to learn, if he finds that he can avoid punishment and gain reward by prevailing on some more diligent boy to do his exercises for him. Those, therefore, who thus indulge their schoolfellows, do it at the expense of their future welfare, and are in reality *foes* where they fancied themselves *friends*. But, generally speaking, they have not even *this* excuse for their pernicious compliance, since it springs from want of sufficient firmness to say no, and deny an earnest request at the command of principle. But to such I would put this question: "Which is the real friend to a child—the person who gives the sweetmeats which it asks for, at the risk of making it ill, merely because it were *so hard* to refuse the dear little thing; or the person who, considering only the interest and health of the child, resists its importunities, though grieved to deny its request? No doubt they would give the palm of *real* kindness, *real* good-nature, to the *latter*; and, in like manner, the boy who *refuses* to do his schoolfellow's task is more truly kind,

more truly good-natured to him, than he who, by indulging his indolence, runs the risk of making him a dunce for life.

But some may reply, "It would make one *odious* in the school, were one to refuse this common compliance with the wants and wishes of one's companions." Not if the refusal were declared to be the result of principle, and every aid not contrary to it were offered and afforded; and there are many ways in which schoolfellows may assist each other, without any violation of truth, and without sharing with them in the PRACTICAL LIE, by imposing on their masters, as theirs, lessons which they never wrote.

This common practice in schools is a PRACTICAL LIE of considerable importance, from its frequency; and because, as I before observed, the result of it is, that the first step which a child sets in a school is into the midst of deceit—tolerated, cherished deceit. For if children are quick at learning, they are called upon immediately to enable others to deceive; and if dull, they are enabled to appear in borrowed plumes themselves.

How often have I heard men in mature life say, "O! I knew such a one at school: he was a very good fellow, but so dull! I have often done his exercises for him." Or I have heard the contrary asserted: "Such a one was a very clever boy at school indeed: he has done many an exercise for me; for he was *very good-natured*." And in neither case was the speaker conscious that he had been guilty of the meanness of

deception himself, or been accessory to it in another.

Parents also correct their children's exercises, and thereby enable them to put a deceit on the master ; not only by this means convincing their offspring of their own total disregard of truth—a conviction doubtless most pernicious in its effects on their young minds—but as full of folly as it is of laxity of principle, since the deceit cannot fail of being detected, whenever the parents are not at hand to afford their assistance.

But is it *necessary* that this school delinquency should exist? Is it not advisable that children should learn the rudiments of truth, rather than falsehood, with those of their mother tongue and the classics? Surely masters and mistresses should watch over the morals, while improving the *minds* of youth. Surely parents ought to be tremblingly solicitous that their children should always speak truth, and be corrected by their preceptors for uttering falsehood. Yet of what use could it be to correct a child for telling a spontaneous lie, on the impulse of strong temptation, if that child be in the daily habit of deceiving his master on system, and of assisting others to do so? While the present practice with regard to exercise-making exists—while boys and girls go up to their preceptors with lies in their hands, whence, sometimes, no doubt, they are transferred to their lips—every hope that truth will be taught in schools, as a necessary moral duty, must be totally, and for ever, annihilated.



## CHAPTER XII.

OUR OWN EXPERIENCE OF THE PAINFUL RESULTS  
OF LYING.

I CANNOT point out the mischievous nature and impolicy of lying better than by referring my readers to their own experience. Which of them does not know some few persons, at least, from whose habitual disregard of truth they have often suffered; and with whom they find intimacy unpleasant, as well as unsafe; because confidence, that charm and cement of intimacy, is wholly wanting in the intercourse? Which of my readers is not sometimes obliged to say, "I ought to add, that my authority for what I have just related is only Mr. or Mrs. such-a-one, or a certain young lady, or a certain young gentleman; therefore, you know what credit is to be given to it."

It has been asserted that every town and village has its idiot; and with equal truth, probably, it may be advanced, that every one's circle of acquaintances contains one or more persons known to be habitual liars, and always mentioned as such. I may be asked, "If this be so, of what consequence is it? And how is it mischievous? If such persons are known and chronicled as liars, they can deceive no one, and therefore can do no harm." But this is not true: we are not always on our guard, either against our own weak-

ness, or against that of others ; and if the most notorious liar tells us something which we wish to believe, our wise resolution never to credit or repeat what he has told us, fades before our desire to confide in him on this occasion. Thus, even in spite of caution, we become the agents of his falsehood ; and, though lovers of truth, are the assistants of lying.

Nor are there many of my readers, I venture to pronounce, who have not at some time or other of their lives had cause to lament some violation of truth, of which they themselves were guilty, and which, at the time, they considered as wise, or positively unavoidable.

But the greatest proof of the impolicy even of occasional lying is, that it exposes one to the danger of never being believed in future. It is difficult to give implicit credence to those who have once deceived us : when they did so deceive, they were governed by a motive sufficiently powerful to overcome their regard for truth ; and how can one ever be sure that equal temptation is not always present, and always overcoming them ?

Admitting that perpetual distrust attends on those who are known to be frequent violators of truth, it seems to me that the liar is as if he was *not*. He is, as it were, annihilated for all the important purposes of life. That man or woman is no better than a nonentity, whose simple assertion is not credited immediately. Those whose words no one dares to repeat, without naming the *authority*, lest the information conveyed by them should be too implicitly credited, such persons, I

repeat it, exist as if they existed *not*. They resemble that diseased eye, which, though perfect in color and appearance, is wholly useless, because it cannot perform the function for which it was created, that of *seeing*; for of what use to others, and of what benefit to themselves, can those be whose tongues are always suspected of uttering falsehood, and whose words, instead of inspiring confidence, that soul and cement of society, and of mutual regard, are received with offensive distrust, and never repeated without caution and apology?

I shall now endeavor to show that speaking the truth does not imply a necessity to wound the feelings of any one; but that, even if the unrestricted practice of truth in society did at first give pain to self-love, it would, in the end, further the best views of benevolence; namely, moral improvement.

There cannot be any reason why *offensive* or *home* truths should be *volunteered*, because one lays it down as a principle that truth must be spoken when *called for*. If I put a question to another, which may, if truly answered, wound either my sensibility or my self-love, I should be rightly served if replied to by a *home truth*; but taking conversation according to its general tenor—that is, under the usual restraints of decorum and propriety—truth and benevolence will, I believe, be found to go hand in hand; and not, as is commonly imagined, be opposed to each other. For instance, if a person in company be old, plain, affected, vulgar in manners, or dressed in a manner unbecoming their years, my utmost

love of truth would never lead me to say, "How old you look! or how plain you are! or how improperly dressed! or how vulgar! and how affected!" But if this person were to say to me, "Do I not look old? am I not plain? am I not improperly dressed? am I vulgar in manners?" and so on, I own that, according to my principles, I must, in my reply, adhere to the strict truth, after having vainly tried to avoid answering, by a serious expostulation on the folly, impropriety, and indelicacy of putting such questions to any one. And what would the consequence be? The person so answered would, probably, never like me again. Still, by my reply, I might have been of the greatest service to the indiscreet questioner. If ugly, the inquirer being convinced that not on outward charms could he or she build their pretensions to please, might study to improve in the more permanent graces of mind and manner. If growing old, the inquirer might be led by my reply to reflect seriously on the brevity of life, and try to grow in grace while advancing in years. If ill-dressed, or in a manner unbecoming a certain time of life, the inquirer might be led to improve in this particular, and be no longer exposed to the sneer of detraction. If vulgar, the inquirer might be induced to keep a watch in future over the admitted vulgarity; and if affected, might endeavor at greater simplicity, and less pretension in appearance.

Thus, the temporary wound to the self-love of the inquirer might be attended with lasting benefit; and benevolence in reality be not wounded, but gratified. Besides, as I have before observed,

the truly benevolent can always find a balm for the wounds which duty obliges them to inflict.

Few persons are so entirely devoid of external and internal charms, as not to be subjects for some kind of commendation; therefore I believe that means may always be found to smooth down the plumes of that self-love which principle has obliged us to ruffle. But if it were to become a general principle of action in society to utter spontaneous truth, the difficult situation in which I have painted the utterers of truth to be placed, would, in time, be impossible; for if certain that the truth would be spoken, and their suspicions concerning their defects confirmed, none would dare to put such questions as I have enumerated. Those questions sprang from the hope of being contradicted and flattered; and were that hope annihilated, no one would ever so question again.

I shall observe here, that those who make mortifying observations on the personal defects of their friends, or on any infirmity either of body or mind, are not actuated by the love of truth, or by any good motive whatever; but that such unpleasant sincerity is merely the result of coarseness of mind, and a mean desire to inflict pain and mortification; therefore, if the utterer of them be noble, or even royal, I should still bring a charge against them, terrible to "ears polite," that of ill-breeding and positive *vulgarity*.

All human beings are convinced in the closet of the importance of truth to the interests of society, and of the mischief which they experience from lying; though few comparatively think the

practice of the one, and avoidance of the other, binding either on the Christian or the moralist, when they are acting in the busy scenes of the world. Nor can I wonder at this inconsistency, when boys and girls, as I have before remarked, however they may be taught to speak the truth at home, are so often tempted into the tolerated commission of falsehood as soon as they set their foot into a public school.

But we must wonder still less at the little shame which attaches to what is called WHITE LYING, when we see it sanctioned in the highest assemblies in this kingdom.\*

It is with fear and humility that I venture to blame a custom prevalent in our legislative meetings; which, as Christianity is declared to be "part and parcel of the law of the land," ought to be Christian as well as wise; and where every member, feeling it binding on him individually to act according to the legal oath, should speak the truth, and nothing *but* the truth. Yet what is the real state of things there on some occasions?

In the heat (the pardonable heat, perhaps,) of political debates, and from the excitement produced by collision of wits, a noble lord, or an honorable commoner, is betrayed into severe personal comment on his antagonist. The *unavoidable* consequence, as it is *thought*, is apology, or duel.

But as these assemblies are called Christian,

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\* Alas! Republics as well as realms furnish too many examples of this.—[EDITOR.]



even the warriors present deem apology a more proper proceeding than duel. Yet how is apology to be made consistent with the dignity and dictates of worldly honor? And how can the necessity of duel, that savage, heathenish disgrace to a civilized and Christian land, be at once obviated? O! the method is easy enough. "It is as easy as lying," and lying is the remedy. A noble lord, or an honorable member, gets up, and says, that undoubtedly his noble or honorable friend used such and such words; but, no doubt, that by those words he did not mean what those words usually mean; but he meant so and so. Some one on the other side immediately rises on behalf of the *offended*, and says, that if the *offender* will say that, by so and so, he did not mean so and so, the *offended* will be perfectly satisfied. On which the offender rises, and declares that by *black* he did not mean *black*, but *white*; in short, that black is white, and white black: the offended says, Enough, I am satisfied! The honorable house is satisfied also that life is put out of peril, and what is called honor is satisfied by the sacrifice ONLY of truth.

I must beg leave to state, that no one can rejoice more fervently than myself when these disputes terminate without duels; but must there be a victim? and must that victim be truth? As there is no intention to deceive on these occasions, nor wish nor expectation to do so, the soul, the essence of lying, is not in the transaction on the side of the *offender*. But the *offended* is forced to say that *he* is satisfied, when

he certainly *cannot* be so. He knows that the *offender* meant, at the moment, what he said; therefore, he is *not* satisfied when he is told, in order to return his half-drawn sword to the scabbard, or his pistol to the holster, that black means white, and white means black.

However, he has his resource: he may ultimately tell the truth—declare himself, when out of the house, unsatisfied; and may (horrible alternative!) *peril* his life, or that of his opponent. But is there no other course which can be pursued by him who gave the offence? Must apology, to *satisfy*, be made in the language of falsehood? Could it not be made in the touching and impressive language of truth? Might not the perhaps already penitent offender say, “No: I will not be guilty of the meanness of subterfuge. By the words which I uttered, I meant at the moment what those words conveyed, and nothing else. But I then saw through the medium of passion: I spoke in the heat of resentment; and I now scruple not to say that I am sorry for what I said, and entreat the pardon of him whom I offended. If he be not satisfied, I know the consequences, and must take the responsibility.”

Surely an apology like this would satisfy any one, however offended; and if the adversary were not contented, the noble or honorable house would undoubtedly deem his resentment brutal, and he would be constrained to pardon the offender, in order to avoid disgrace.

But I am not contented with the conclusion

of the apology which I have put into the mouth of the offending party; for I have made him willing, if necessary, to comply with the requisitions of *worldly honor*. Instead of ending his apology in that unholy manner, I should have wished it to end thus: "But if this heartfelt apology be not sufficient to appease the anger of him whom I have *offended*, and he expects me, in order to expiate my fault, to meet him in the lawless warfare of single combat, I solemnly declare that I will not so meet him; that not even the dread of being accused of cowardice, and being frowned on by those whose respect I value, shall induce me to put in peril either his life or my own."

If he and his opponent be married men, and, above all, if he be *indeed* a Christian, he might add, "I will not, for any *personal* considerations, run the risk of making his wife and mine a widow, and his children and my own fatherless. I will not run the risk of disappointing that confiding tenderness which looks up to us for happiness and protection, by any rash and selfish action of mine. But I am not actuated to this refusal by this consideration alone: I am withheld by one more binding and powerful still. For I remember the precepts taught in the Bible,\* and confirmed in the New Testament; and I cannot, will not, *dare* not enter into single and deadly

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\* The author inconsiderately writes the name of "Bible" to the Old Testament, as if the New were not a part of the Bible.—[EDITOR.]

combat, in opposition to that awful command, 'Thou shalt not kill!' "

Would any one, however narrow and worldly in his conceptions, venture to condemn as a coward, meanly shrinking from the responsibility he had incurred, the man that could dare to put forth sentiments like these, regardless of that fearful thing, "the world's dread laugh?"

There might be some among his hearers by whom this truly noble daring could not possibly be appreciated. But though in both houses of parliament there might be heroes present, whose heads are even bowed down by the weight of their laurels—men whose courage has often paled the cheek of their enemies in battle, and brought the loftiest low—still, I must venture to assert, he who can dare, for the sake of conscience, to speak and act counter to the prejudices and passions of the world, at the risk of losing his standing in society, such a man is a hero in the best sense of the word: his is courage of the most difficult kind; that moral courage, founded indeed on *fear*, but a fear that tramples firmly on every fear of man; for it is that holy fear, the FEAR OF GOD.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### LYING THE MOST COMMON OF ALL VICES.

I HAVE observed in the preceding chapter, and elsewhere, that all persons, in *theory*, con-

sider lying as the most odious, mean, and pernicious practice. It is also one which is more than almost any other reprov'd, if not punished, both in servants and children; for parents, those excepted whose moral sense has been rendered utterly callous, or who never possessed any, mourn over the slightest deviation from truth in their offspring, and visit it with instant punishment. Who has not frequently heard masters and mistresses of families declaring that some of their servants were such liars that they could keep them no longer? Yet, trying and painful as *intercourse* with liars is universally allowed to be, since confidence, that necessary guardian of domestic peace, cannot exist where they are, lying is, *undoubtedly*, THE MOST COMMON OF ALL VICES. A friend of mine was once told by a confessor, that it was the one most frequently confessed to him; and I am sure that if we enter society with eyes open to detect this propensity, we shall soon be convinced that there are few, if any, of our acquaintance, however distinguished for virtue, who are not, on some occasions, led by good and sufficient motives, in their own opinion at least, either to violate or withhold the truth with intent to deceive. Nor do their most conscious or even detected deviations from veracity fill the generality of the world with shame or compunction. If they commit any other sins, they shrink from avowing them; but I have often heard persons confess that they had, on certain occasions, uttered a direct falsehood, with an air which proved them to be proud of the

deceptive skill with which it was uttered ; adding, "But it was only a white lie, you know," with a degree of self-complacency which showed that, in their eyes, a white lie was no lie at all. And what is more common than to hear even the professedly pious, as well as the moral, assert that a deviation from truth, or at least withholding the truth, so as to deceive, is sometimes absolutely necessary? Yet I would seriously ask of those who thus argue, whether, when they repeat the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," they feel willing to admit, either in themselves or others, a mental reservation, allowing them to *pilfer* in any degree, or even in the slightest particular make free with the property of another? Would they think that pilfering tea or sugar was a venial fault in a servant, and excusable under strong temptations? They would answer, "No;" and be ready to say, in the words of the apostle, "Whosoever in this respect shall offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Yet I venture to assert that *little lying*, alias white lying, is as much an infringement of the moral law against "speaking leasing," as little pilfering is of the commandment not to steal; and I defy any consistent moralist to escape from the obligation of the principle which I here lay down.

The economical rule, "Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves," may, with great benefit, be applied to morals. Few persons, comparatively, are exposed to the danger of committing *great crimes*, but all are daily and hourly tempted to commit *little sins*.



Beware, therefore, of slight deviations from purity and rectitude, and great ones *will take care of themselves*; and the habit of resistance to trivial sins will make you able to resist temptation to errors of a more culpable nature; and as those persons will not be likely to exceed improperly in pounds who are laudably saving in pence, and as little lies are to *great ones* what pence are to pounds, if we acquire a habit of telling truth on trivial occasions, we shall never be induced to violate it on serious and important ones.

I shall now borrow the aid of others to strengthen what I have already said on this important subject, or have still to say; as I am painfully conscious of my own inability to do justice to it; and if the good which I desire be but effected, I am willing to resign to others the merit of the success.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### EXTRACTS FROM LORD BACON, AND OTHERS.

IN a gallery of moral philosophers, the rank of Bacon, in my opinion, resembles that of Titian in a gallery of pictures; and some of his successors not only look up to him as authority for certain excellences, but making him, in a measure, their study, they endeavor to diffuse over their own productions the beauty of his conceptions, and the depth and breadth of his manner. I am, there-

fore, sorry that those passages in his Essay on Truth which bear upon the subject before me, are so unsatisfactorily brief: however, as even a sketch from the hand of a master is valuable, I give the following extracts from the essay in question :

“But to pass from theological and philosophical truth, to truth, or rather veracity, in civil business, it will be acknowledged, even by those who practice it not, that clear and sound dealing is the honor of man’s nature, and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent, which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that does so overwhelm a man with shame, as to be found false or perfidious; and therefore Montaigne saith very acutely, when he inquired the reason why the giving the lie should be such a disgraceful and odious charge, ‘If it be well weighed,’ said he, ‘to say that a man lies is as much as to say that he is a bravado toward God, and a coward toward man. For the liar insults God, and crouches to man.’”—*Essay on Truth*.

I hope I have derived considerable assistance from Addison; as he ranks so very high in the list of moral writers, that Dr. Watts said of his greatest work, “There is so much virtue in the eight volumes of the Spectator, such a reverence of things sacred, so many valuable remarks for our conduct in life, that they are not improper to lie in parlors, or summer-houses, to entertain one’s thoughts in any moments of leisure.” But, in

spite of his fame as a moralist, and of this high eulogium from one of the best authorities, Addison appears to have done very little as an advocate for spontaneous truth, and an assailant of spontaneous lying; and has been much less zealous and effective than either Hawkesworth or Johnson. However, what he has said is well said; and I have pleasure in giving it:

“The great violation of the point of honor from man to man is, giving the lie. One may tell another that he drinks and blasphemes, and it may pass unnoticed; but to say he lies, though but in jest, is an affront that nothing but blood can expiate. The reason perhaps may be, because no other vice implies a want of courage so much as the making of a lie; and, therefore, telling a man he lies, is touching him in the most sensible part of honor, and indirectly calling him a coward. I cannot omit, under this head, what Herodotus tells us of the ancient Persians: that, from the age of five years to twenty, they instruct their sons only in three things: to manage the horse, to make use of the bow, and to *speak the truth*.”\* *Spectator*, Letter 99.

I know not whence Addison took the extract from which I give the following quotation, but I refer my readers to No. 352 of the *Spectator*:

“Truth is always consistent with itself, and needs nothing to help it out: it is always near at

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\* The Christian parent will improve on the Persian, by training his children to the truth from their very birth.—[EDITOR.]

hand, and sits upon our lips, and is ready to drop out before we are aware: whereas a LIE is troublesome, and sets a man's invention upon the rack; and one trick wants a great many more to make it good. It is like building on a false foundation, which constantly stands in need of props to shore it up, and proves at last more chargeable than to have raised a substantial building at first upon a true and solid foundation; for sincerity is firm and substantial, and there is nothing hollow and unsound in it; and, because it is plain and open, fears no discovery, of which the crafty man is always in danger. All his pretences are so transparent, that he that runs may read them: he is the last man that finds himself to be found out; and while he takes it for granted that he makes fools of others, he renders himself ridiculous. Add to all this, that sincerity is the most compendious wisdom, and an excellent instrument for the speedy dispatch of business. It creates confidence in those we have to deal with, saves the labor of many inquiries, and brings things to an issue in a few words. It is like travelling in a plain beaten road, which commonly brings a man sooner to his journey's end than by-ways, in which men often lose themselves. In a word, whatsoever convenience may be thought to be in falsehood and dissimulation, it is soon over; but the inconvenience of it is perpetual, because it brings a man under an everlasting jealousy and suspicion, so that he is not believed when he speaks truth, nor trusted, perhaps, when he means honestly. When a man has once forfeited the reputation of his in-

tegrity, he is set fast, and nothing will serve his turn—neither truth nor falsehood.”

Dr. Hawkesworth, in the “Adventurer,” makes lying the subject of a whole number; and begins thus: “When Aristotle was once asked what a man could gain by uttering falsehoods, he replied, ‘Not to be credited when he shall speak the truth.’ The character of a liar is at once so hateful and contemptible, that even of those who have lost their virtue, it might be expected that, from the violation of truth, they should be restrained by their pride.” And again: “Almost every other vice that disgraces human nature may be kept in countenance by applause and association. . . . The liar, and only the liar, is invariably and universally despised, abandoned, and disowned. It is natural to expect that a crime thus generally detested should be generally avoided, etc. Yet so it is, that, in defiance of censure and contempt, truth is frequently violated; and scarcely the most vigilant and unremitted circumspection will secure him, that mixes with mankind, from being hourly deceived by men of whom it can scarcely be imagined that they mean any injury to him, or profit to themselves.” He then enters into a copious discussion of the lie of vanity, which he calls the most common of lies, and not the least mischievous; but I shall content myself with only one extract from the conclusion of this paper: “There is, I think, an ancient law in Scotland, by which LEASING-MAKING was capitally punished. I am, indeed, far from desiring to increase in this country

the number of executions; yet I cannot but think that they who destroy the confidence of society, weaken the credit of intelligence, and interrupt the security of life, might very properly be awakened to a sense of their crimes by denunciations of a whipping-post or pillory; since many are so insensible of right and wrong, that they have no standard of action *but the law*, nor feel *guilt* but as they dread *punishment*."

In No. 54 of the same work, Dr. Hawkesworth says that "these men, who consider the imputation of some vices as a compliment, would resent that of a lie as an insult, for which *life* only could atone. Lying, however," he adds, "does not incur more infamy than it deserves, though other vices incur less. But," continues he, "there is equal *turpitude* and yet greater *meanness* in those forms of speech which deceive without direct falsehood. The crime is committed with greater deliberation, as it requires more contrivance; and by the offenders the use of language is totally perverted. They conceal a meaning opposite to that which they express: their speech is a kind of riddle propounded for an evil purpose."

"Indirect lies, more effectually than others, destroy that mutual confidence which is said to be the band of society. They are more frequently repeated, because they are not prevented by the dread of detection. Is it not astonishing that a practice so universally infamous, should not be more generally avoided? To think, is to renounce it; and, that I may fix the attention of my readers



a little longer upon the subject, I shall relate a story, which, perhaps, by those who have much sensibility, will not soon be forgotten."

He then proceeds to relate a story, which is, I think, more full of moral teaching than any one I ever read on the subject; and so superior to the preceding ones written by myself, that I am glad there is no necessity for me to bring them in immediate competition with it; and that all I need do is to give the moral of that story. Dr. Hawkesworth calls the tale, "The Fatal Effects of False Apologies and Pretences;" but "the fatal effects of *white lying*" would have been a juster title; and perhaps my readers will be of the same opinion, when I have given an extract from it. I shall preface the extract by saying that, by a series of white lies, well-intentioned, but, like all lies, mischievous in their result, either to the purity of the moral feeling, or to the interests of those who utter them, jealousy was aroused in the husband of one of the heroines, and duel and death were the consequences. The following letter, written by the too successful combatant to his wife, will sufficiently explain all that is necessary for my purpose:

"My dear Charlotte: I am the most wretched of all men; but I do not upbraid you as the cause. Would that I were not more guilty than you! We are the martyrs of dissimulation. But your dissimulation and falsehood were the effects of mine. By the success of *a lie, put into the mouth of a chairman*, I was prevented reading a letter which would at last have undeceived me; and,

by persisting in dissimulation, the Captain has made his friend a fugitive, and his wife a widow. Thus does insincerity terminate in misery and confusion, whether in its immediate purpose it succeeds, or is disappointed. If we ever meet again, (to meet again in peace is impossible, but, if we ever meet again,) let us resolve to be sincere: to be *sincere* is to be *wise, innocent, and safe*. We venture to commit faults, which shame or fear would prevent, if we did not hope to conceal them by a lie. But, in the labyrinth of falsehood, men meet those evils which they seek to avoid; and as in the straight path of truth alone they can see before them, in the straight path of truth alone they can pursue felicity with success. Adieu! I am——dreadful!—I can subscribe nothing that does not reproach and torment me.”

Within a few weeks after the receipt of this letter, the unhappy lady heard that her husband was cast away, in his passage to France.

I shall next bring forward a greater champion of truth than the author of the *Adventurer*; and put her cause into the hands of the mighty author of the *Rambler*. Boswell, in his *Life of Dr. Johnson*, says thus:

“He would not allow his servant to say he was not at home when he really was.” “A servant’s strict regard for truth,” said he, “must be weakened by the practice. A *philosopher* may know that it is merely a *form of denial*; but few servants are such *nice distinguishers*. If I accustom a servant to tell a lie for *me*, have I not rea-

son to apprehend that he will tell many lies for *himself?*”\*

“The importance of strict and scrupulous veracity,” says Boswell, vol. ii. pp. 454, 455, “cannot be too often inculcated. Johnson was known to

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\* Boswell adds, in his own person, “I am however satisfied, that every servant, of any degree of intelligence, understands saying, ‘his master is not at home,’ not at all as the affirmation of a fact, but as customary words, intimating that his master wishes not to be seen; so that there can be no bad effect from it.” So says the *man of the world*; and so say almost *all* the men of the world, and women too. But even they will admit that the opinion of Johnson is of more weight, on a question of morals, than that of *Boswell*; and I beg leave to add that of another powerful-minded and pious man. Scott, the editor of the Bible, says, in a note to the fourth chapter of Judges, “A very criminal deviation from simplicity and godliness is become customary amongst professed Christians. I mean the instructing and requiring servants to *prevaricate*, (to word it no more harshly,) in order that their masters may be preserved from the inconvenience of unwelcome visitants. And it should be considered whether they who require their servants to disregard the truth, for their pleasure, will not teach them an evil lesson, and habituate them to use falsehood for their own pleasure also.” When I first wrote on this subject, I was not aware that writers of such eminence as those from whom I *now* quote had written respecting this *Lie of Convenience*; but it is most gratifying to me to find the truth of my humble opinion confirmed by such men as Johnson, Scott, and Chalmers.

I know not who wrote a very amusing and humorous book, called “Thinks I to Myself;” but this subject is admirably treated there, and with effective ridicule, as, indeed, is worldly insincerity in general.

be so rigidly attentive to it, that, even in his common conversation, the slightest circumstance was mentioned with exact precision. The knowledge of his having such a principle and habit, made his friends have a perfect reliance on the truth of EVERY THING THAT HE TOLD, however it might have been DOUBTED if told by OTHERS.

“What a bribe and reward does this anecdote hold out to us to be accurate in relation! for, of all *privileges*, that of being considered as a person on whose veracity and accuracy every one can implicitly rely, is perhaps the most valuable to a social being.”—Vol. iii. p. 450.

“Next morning, while we were at breakfast,” observes the amusing biographer, “Johnson gave a very earnest recommendation of what he himself practiced with the utmost conscientiousness: I mean, a strict regard to truth, even in the most minute particulars. ‘Accustom your children,’ said he, ‘constantly to this. If a thing happened at one window, and they, when relating it, say that it happened at another, do not let it pass; but instantly check them: *you don’t know where deviation from truth will end.*’ Our lively hostess, whose fancy was impatient of the rein, fidgetted at this, and ventured to say, ‘This is too much. If Mr. Johnson should forbid me to drink tea, I would comply, as I should feel the restraint only twice a day; but little variations in narrative must happen a thousand times a day, if one is not perpetually watching.’ Johnson: ‘Well, madam, and you *ought to be perpetually watching.* It is more from *carelessness about truth*, than from

*intentional lying*, that there is so much falsehood in the world.' ”

“ Johnson inculcated upon all his friends the importance of perpetual vigilance against the slightest degree of falsehood ; the effect of which, as Sir Joshua Reynolds observed to me, has been, that all who were of his *school* are distinguished for a love of truth and accuracy, which they would not have possessed in the same degree if they had not been acquainted with Johnson.”\*

“ We talked of the casuistical question,” says Boswell, vol. iv. 334, “ whether it was allowable at any time to depart from truth. Johnson: ‘ The general rule is, that truth should never be violated ; because it is of the utmost importance to the comfort of life that we should have a full security by mutual faith ; and occasional inconveniences should be willingly suffered, that we may preserve it. I deny,’ he observed further on, ‘ the lawfulness of telling a lie to a sick man, for fear of alarming him. *You have no business with consequences : you are to tell the truth.*’ ”

Leaving what the great moralist himself added on this subject, because it is not necessary for my purpose, I shall do Boswell the justice to insert the following testimony which he himself bears to the importance of truth :

“ I cannot help thinking that there is much weight in the opinion of those who have held that

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\* However Boswell’s self-flattery might blind him, what he says relative to the harmlessness of servants denying their masters, makes him an exception to this general rule.



truth, as an eternal and immutable principle, is never to be violated for supposed, previous, or superior obligations, of which every man being led to judge for himself, there is great danger that we too often, from partial motives, persuade ourselves that they exist; and, probably, whatever extraordinary instances may sometimes occur, where some evil may be prevented by violating this noble principle, it would be found that human happiness would, *upon the whole*, be more perfect, were truth universally preserved."

But however just are the above observations, they are inferior in pithiness and practical power to the following few words, extracted from another of Johnson's sentences. "All truth is not of equal importance; but if *little violations be allowed, every violation will, in time, be thought little.*"

The following quotation is from the 96th number of the Rambler. It is the introduction to an Allegory, called Truth, Falsehood, and Fiction; but, as I think his didactic is here superior to his narrative, I shall content myself with giving the first.

"It is reported of the Persians, by an ancient writer, that the sum of their education consisted in teaching youth to ride, to shoot with the bow, and to speak truth. The bow and the horse were easily mastered; but it would have been happy if we had been informed by what arts veracity was cultivated, and by what preservations a Persian mind was secured against the temptations of falsehood.



“There are, indeed, in the present corruptions of mankind, many incitements to forsake truth; the need of palliating our own faults, and the convenience of imposing on the ignorance or credulity of others, so frequently occur; so many immediate evils are to be avoided, and so many present gratifications obtained by craft and delusion, that very few of those who are much entangled in life, have spirit and constancy sufficient to support them in the steady practice of open veracity. In order that all men may be taught to speak truth, it is necessary that all likewise should learn to hear it; for no species of falsehood is more frequent than flattery, to which the coward is betrayed by fear, the dependent by interest, and the friend by tenderness. Those who are neither servile nor timorous, are yet desirous to bestow pleasure; and, while unjust demands of praise continue to be made, there will always be some whom hope, fear, or kindness will dispose to pay them.”

There cannot be a stronger picture given of the difficulties attendant on speaking the strict truth; and I own I feel it to be a difficulty which it requires the highest of motives to enable us to overcome. Still, as the old proverb says, “where there is a will, there is a way;” and if that will be derived from the only right source, the only effective motive, I am well convinced that all obstacles to the utterance of spontaneous truth would at length vanish, and that falsehood would become as rare as it is contemptible and pernicious.

The contemporary of Johnson and Hawkesworth, Lord Kames, comes next on my list of

moral writers who have treated on the subject of truth; but I am not able to give more than a short extract from his "Sketches of the History of Man;" a work which had no small reputation in its day, and was in every one's hand till eclipsed by the depth and brilliancy of more modern Scotch philosophers.

He says, p. 169, in his 7th section, with respect to veracity in particular, "Man is so constituted, that he must be indebted to information for the knowledge of most things that benefit or hurt him; and if he could not depend on information, society would be very little benefited. Further, it is wisely ordered that we should be bound by the moral sense to speak truth, even where we perceive no harm in transgressing that duty, *because it is sufficient that harm may come, though not foreseen; at the same time, falsehood always does mischief.* It may happen not to injure us externally in our reputation or our goods; but it never fails to injure us internally: the sweetest and most refined pleasure of society is a candid intercourse of sentiments, of opinion, of desires, and wishes; and it would be poisonous to indulge any falsehood in such an intercourse."

My next extracts are from two celebrated divines of the Church of England, Bishop Beveridge, and Archdeacon Paley. The Bishop, in his "Private Thoughts," thus heads one of his sections, which he denominates resolutions:

"RESOLUTION III.—*I am resolved, by the grace of God, always to make my tongue and heart*

*go together, so as never to speak with the one what I do not think in the other.*

“As my happiness consisteth in nearness and vicinity, so doth my holiness in likeness and conformity to the chiefest good. I am so much the better, as I am the liker the best; and so much the holier, as I am more conformable to the holiest, or rather to Him who is holiness itself. Now, one great title which the Most High is pleased to give himself, and by which he is pleased to reveal himself to us, is the God of truth; so that I shall be so much the liker to the God of truth, by how much I am the more constant to the truth of God. And the farther I deviate from this, the nearer I approach to the nature of the Devil, who is the father of lies, and liars too. John viii. 44. And therefore, to avoid the scandal and reproach, as well as the dangerous malignity of this damnable sin, I am resolved, by the blessing of God, always to tune my tongue in unison with my heart, so as never to speak any thing but what I think really to be true. So that, if ever I speak what is not true, it shall not be the error of my will, but of my understanding.

“I know, lies are commonly distinguished into officious, pernicious, and jocose; and some may fancy some of them *more tolerable than others*. But, for my own part, I think they are *all* pernicious; and therefore not to be jested withal, nor indulged, *upon any pretence or color whatsoever*. Not as if it was a sin not to speak exactly as a thing is in itself, or as it seems to

me in its literal meaning, without some liberty granted to rhetorical tropes and figures; (for so, the Scripture itself would be chargeable with lies; many things being contained in it which are not true in a literal sense.) But I must so use *rhetorical*, as not to abuse my *Christian* liberty; and therefore, never to make use of hyperboles, ironies, or other tropes and figures, to deceive or impose upon my auditors, but only for the better adorning, illustrating, or confirming the matter.

“I am resolved never to promise any thing with my mouth, but what I intend to perform in my heart; and never to intend to perform any thing but what I am sure I can perform. For though I may intend to do as I say now, yet there are a thousand weighty things that intervene, which may turn the balance of my intentions, or otherwise hinder the performance of my promise.”

I come now to an extract from Dr. Paley, the justly celebrated author of the work entitled, “Moral Philosophy.”

“A lie is a breach of promise; for whosoever seriously addresses his discourse to another, tacitly promises to speak the truth, because he knows that the truth is expected. Or the obligation of veracity may be made out from the direct ill consequences of lying to social happiness; which consequences consist, either in some specific injury to particular individuals, or in the destruction of that confidence which is essential to the intercourse of human life; for which latter reason, a lie may be pernicious in its

general tendency ; and, therefore, criminal, though it produce no particular or visible mischief to any one. There are falsehoods which are not lies ; that is, which are not criminal, as where no one is deceived ; which is the case in parables, fables, jests, tales to create mirth, ludicrous embellishments of a story, where the declared design of the speaker is, not to inform, but to divert : *compliments in the subscription of a letter : a servant's denying his master : a prisoner's pleading not guilty : an advocate asserting the justice, or his belief in the justice, of his client's cause. In such instances, no confidence is destroyed, because none was reposed : no promise to speak the truth is violated, because none was given, or understood to be given.*

“In the first place, it is almost impossible to pronounce beforehand with certainty concerning any lie, that it is inoffensive, *volat irrevocabile*, and collects oftentimes reactions in its flight, which entirely change its nature. It may owe, possibly, its mischief to the officiousness or misrepresentation of those who circulate it ; but the mischief is, nevertheless, in some degree chargeable upon the original editor. In the next place, this liberty in conversation defeats its own end. Much of the pleasure, and all the benefit, of conversation, depend upon our opinion of the speaker's veracity, for which this rule leaves no foundation. The faith, indeed, of a hearer must be extremely perplexed, who considers the speaker, or believes that the speaker considers himself, as under no obligation to *adhere to truth*, but

according to the *particular importance of what he relates*. But, besides and above both these reasons, *white lies* always introduce others of a darker complexion. I have seldom known any one who deserted *truth in trifles* that could be *trusted in matters of importance*.\*

“Nice distinctions are out of the question upon occasions which, like those of speech, return every hour. The habit, therefore, when once formed, is easily extended to serve the designs of malice or interest: like all habits, it spreads indeed of itself.

“As there may be falsehoods which are not lies, so there are many lies without literal or direct falsehood. An opening is always left for this species of prevarication, when the literal and grammatical signification of a sentence is different from the popular and customary meaning. It is the wilful deceit that makes the lie; and we wilfully deceive when our expressions are not true in the sense in which we believe the hearer apprehends them. Besides, it is absurd to contend for any sense of words, in opposition to usage, and upon nothing else; or a man may *act* a lie, as by pointing his finger in a wrong direction, when a traveller inquires of him his road; or when a tradesman shuts up his windows, to induce his creditors to believe that he is abroad; for, to all moral purposes, and

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\* How contrary is the spirit of this wise observation, and the following ones, to that which Paley manifests in his toleration of servants being taught to deny their masters!



therefore as to veracity, speech and action are the same—speech being only a mode of action. Or, lastly, there may be lies of omission. A writer on English history, who in his account of the reign of Charles the First, should wilfully suppress any evidence of that prince's despotic measures and designs, might be said to lie; for, by entitling his book a History of England, he engages to relate the whole truth of the history, or, at least, all he knows of it."

I feel entire unity of sentiment with Paley on all that he has advanced in these extracts, except in those passages which are printed in *Italic*; but Chalmers and Scott have given a complete refutation to his opinion on the innocence of a servant's denying his master, in the extracts given in a preceding chapter; and it will be as ably refuted in some succeeding extracts. But eloquent and convincing as Paley generally is, it is not from his Moral Philosophy that he derives his purest reputation. He has long been considered as lax, negligent, and inconclusive, on many points, as a moral philosopher.

It was when he came forward as a Christian warrior against infidelity, that he brought his best powers into the field; and his name will live for ever as the author of *Evidences of Christianity*, and the *Horæ Paulinæ*.\* I shall now avail my-

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\* I heard the venerable Bishop of ——— say, that when he gave Dr. Paley some very valuable preferment, he addressed him thus: "I give you this, Dr. Paley, not for your Moral Philosophy, nor for your Natural Theology, but for your *Evidences of Christianity*, and your *Horæ Paulinæ*."

self of the assistance of a powerful and eloquent writer of a more modern date, William Godwin, with whom I have entire correspondence of opinion on the subject of spontaneous truth, though on some other subjects I decidedly differ from him. "It was further proposed," says he, "to consider the value of truth in a practical view, as it relates to the incidents and commerce of ordinary life, under which form it is known by the denomination of sincerity.

"The powerful recommendations attendant on sincerity are obvious. It is intimately connected with the general dissemination of *innocence*, energy, intellectual improvement, and philanthropy. Did every man impose this law upon himself; did he regard himself as not authorized to conceal any part of his character and conduct; this circumstance alone would prevent millions of actions from being perpetrated, in which we are now induced to engage, by the prospect of success and impunity." "There is a further benefit that would result to me from the habit of telling every man the truth, regardless of the dictates of worldly prudence and custom: I should acquire a clear, ingenuous, and unembarrassed air. According to the established modes of society, whenever I have a circumstance to state which would require some effort of mind and discrimination to enable me to do it justice, and state it with proper effect, I fly from the task, and take refuge in silence and equivocation." "But the principle which forbade me concealment, would keep my mind for ever awake, and for ever warm. I should always be obliged to exert my attention,

lest, in pretending to tell the truth, I should tell it in so imperfect and mangled a way as to produce the effect of falsehood. If I spoke to a man of my own faults, or those of his neighbor, I should be anxious not to suffer them to come distorted or exaggerated to his mind, or permit what at first was fact, to degenerate into *satire*. If I spoke to him of the errors he had himself committed, I should carefully avoid those inconsiderate expressions which might convert what was in itself beneficent into offence, and my thoughts would be full of that kindness and generous concern for his welfare which such a task necessarily brings with it. The effects of sincerity upon others would be similar to its effects on him that practiced it. Plain-dealing, truth spoken with kindness, but spoken with sincerity, is the most wholesome of all disciplines." "The only species of sincerity which can, in any degree, prove satisfactory to the enlightened moralist and politician, is that where frankness is perfect, and every degree of reserve is discarded."

"Nor is there any danger that such a character should degenerate into ruggedness and brutality.

"Sincerity, upon the principles on which it is here recommended, is practiced from a consciousness of *its utility*, and from sentiments of philanthropy.

"It will communicate frankness to the voice, fervor to the gesture, and kindness to the heart.

"The duty of sincerity is one of those general principles which reflection and experience have

enjoined upon us as conducive to the happiness of mankind."

"Sincerity and plain-dealing are eminently conducive to the interests of mankind at large, because they afford that ground of confidence and reasonable expectation which are essential to wisdom and virtue."

I feel it difficult to forbear giving further extracts from this very interesting and well-argued part of the work from which I quote; but the limits necessary for my own book forbid me to indulge myself in copious quotations from this. I must, however, give two further extracts from the conclusion of this chapter: "No man can be eminently either respectable, or amiable, or useful, who is not distinguished for the frankness and candor of his manners. . . . He that is not conspicuously sincere; either very little partakes of the passion of doing good, or is pitiably ignorant of the means by which the objects of true benevolence are to be effected." The writer proceeds to discuss the mode of *excluding visitors*; and it is done in so powerful a manner, that I must avail myself of the aid which it affords me.

"Let us, then, according to the well-known axiom of MORALITY, put ourselves in the place of that man upon whom is imposed this ungracious task. Is there any of us that would be contented to perform it in person, and to say that our father and brother were not at home, when they were really in the house? Should we not feel ourselves contaminated by the PLEBEIAN LIE? Can we thus be justified in requiring that from

another which we should shrink from as an act of dishonor in ourselves?" I must here beg leave to state that, generally speaking, masters and mistresses only command their servants to tell a lie which they would be very willing *to tell themselves*. I have heard wives deny their husbands, husbands their wives, children their parents, and parents their children, with as much unblushing effrontery as if there were no such thing as truth, or its obligations; but I respect his question on this subject, envy him his ignorance, and admire his epithet, PLEBEIAN LIE.

But then I think that *all* lies are plebeian. Was it not a king of France, a captive in this kingdom, who said, (with an honorable consciousness that a sovereign is entitled to set a high example to his people,) "If honor be driven from every other spot, it should always inhabit the breast of kings!" And if truth be banished from every other description of persons, it ought more especially to be found on the lips of those whom rank and fortune have placed above the reach of strong temptation to falsehood.

But while I think that, however exalted be the rank of the person who utters a lie, that person suffers by his deceit a worse than plebeian degradation, I also assert, that the humblest plebeian, who is known to be incapable of falsehood, and to utter, on all occasions, spontaneous truth, is raised far above the mendacious patrician in the scale of real respectability; and, in comparison, the plebeian becomes patrician, and the patrician plebeian.



I shall conclude my references with extracts from two modern Scotch philosophers of considerable and deserved reputation, Dr. Reid, and Dr. Thomas Brown.\*

“Without fidelity and trust, there can be no human society. There never was a society, even of savages, nay, even of robbers and pirates, in which there was not a great degree of veracity and fidelity amongst themselves. Every man thinks himself injured and ill-used when he is imposed upon. Every man takes it as a reproach when falsehood is imputed to him. There are the clearest evidences that all men disapprove of falsehood, when their judgment is not biased.”—*Reid's Essays on the Power of the Human Mind*, chap. vi., “On the Nature of a Contract.”

“The next duty of which we have to treat, is that of veracity, which relates to the knowledge or belief of others, as capable of being affected by the meanings, true or false, which our words or our conduct may convey; and consists in the faithful conformity of our language, or of our conduct, when it is intended tacitly to supply the place of language, to the truth which we profess to deliver; or, at least, to that which is at the time believed by us to be true. So much of the happiness of social life is derived from the use of language, and so profitless would the mere power

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\* This latter gentleman, with whom I had the pleasure of being personally acquainted, has, by his early death, left a chasm in the world of literature, and in the domestic circle in which he moved, which cannot easily be filled up.



of language be, but for the truth which dictates it, that the abuse of the confidence which is placed in our declarations may not merely be in the highest degree injurious to the individual deceived, but would tend, if general, to throw back the whole race of mankind into that barbarism from which they have emerged, and ascended through still purer air, and still brighter sunshine, to that noble height which they have reached. It is not wonderful, therefore, that veracity, so important to the happiness of all, and yet subject to so many temptations of personal interest in the violation of it, should, in all nations, have had a high place assigned to it among the virtues."—*Dr. Thomas Brown's Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, vol. iv. p. 225.

It may be asked why I have taken the trouble to quote from so many authors, in order to prove what no one ever doubted; namely, the importance and necessity of speaking the truth, and the meanness and mischief of uttering falsehood. But I have added authority to authority, in order renewedly to force on the attention of my *readers* that not one of these writers mentions any allowed *exception* to the general rule, that truth is always to be spoken: no *mental reservation* is pointed out as permitted on *special occasions*: no individual is authorized to be the judge of right or wrong in his own case, and to set his own opinion of the propriety and necessity of lying, in particular instances, against the positive precept to abstain from lying; an injunction which is so

commonly enforced in the page of the moralist, that it becomes a sort of imperative command. Still, in spite of the universally acknowledged conviction of mankind, that truth is virtue, and falsehood vice, I scarcely know an individual who does not occasionally shrink from acting up to his conviction on this point, and is not, at times, irresistibly impelled to qualify that conviction, by saying, that on "ALMOST all occasions the truth is to be spoken, and never to be withheld." Or they may, perhaps, quote the well-known proverb, that "truth is not to be spoken at all times." But the *real* meaning of that proverb appears to me to be simply this: that we are never *officiously* or *gratuitously* to utter offensive truths; not that truth, when required, is ever to be *withheld*. The principle of truth is an immutable principle, or it is of no use as a guard, nor safe as the foundation of morals. A moral law on which it is dangerous to act to the uttermost, is, however admirable, no better than Harlequin's horse, which was the very best and finest of all horses, and worthy of the admiration of the whole world, but unfortunately the horse was DEAD; and if the law to tell the truth—inviolably is not to be strictly adhered to, without any regard to consequences, it is, however admirable, as useless as the merits of Harlequin's dead horse. King Theodoric, when advised by his courtiers to debase the coin, declared, "that nothing which bore his image should ever lie." Happy would it be for the interests of society, if, having as much proper self-respect as this good monarch

had, we could resolve never to allow our looks or words to bear any impress, but that of the *strict truth*; and were as reluctant to give a false impression of ourselves, in any way, as to circulate light sovereigns and forged bank-notes. O that the day may come when it shall be thought as dishonorable to commit the slightest breach of veracity, as to pass counterfeit shillings; and when both shall be deemed equally detrimental to the safety and prosperity of the community!

I intend in a future work to make some observations on several *collateral descendants* from the large family of lies: such as INACCURACY IN RELATION; PROMISE-BREAKING; ENGAGEMENT-BREAKING, and WANT OF PUNCTUALITY. Perhaps PROCRASTINATION comes in a degree under the head of lying; at least, procrastinators lie to themselves: they say, "I will do so and so tomorrow;" and as they believe their own assertions, they are guilty of self-deception, the most dangerous of all deceptions. But those who are enabled by constant watchfulness never to deceive others, will at last learn never to deceive *themselves*; for truth being their constant aim in all their dealings, they will not shrink from that most effective of all means to acquire it, SELF-EXAMINATION.

## CHAPTER XV.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE EXTRACTS FROM  
HAWKESWORTH AND OTHERS.

IN the preceding chapter I have given various extracts from authors who have written on the subject of truth, and borne their testimony to the necessity of a strict adherence to it on all occasions, if individuals wish not only to be safe and respectable themselves, but to establish the interests of society on a sure foundation ; but, before I proceed to other comments on this important subject, I shall make observations on some of the above-mentioned extracts.

Dr. Hawkesworth says, “ that the liar, and only the liar, is universally despised, abandoned, and disowned.” But is this the fact ? Inconvenient, dangerous, and disagreeable though it be to associate with those on whose veracity we cannot depend, yet which of us has ever known himself, or others, refuse intercourse with persons who habitually violate the truth ? We dismiss the servant, indeed, whose habit of lying offends us, and we cease to employ the menial, or the tradesman ; but when did we ever hesitate to associate with a liar of rank and opulence ? When was our moral sense so delicate as to make us refuse to eat of the costly food, and reject the favor or services of any one, because the lips of the obliger were stained with falsehood. and the conversation with

guile? *Surely*, this writer overrates the delicacy of moral feeling in society, or we, of these latter days, have fearfully degenerated from our ancestors.

He also says, "that the imputation of a lie is an insult for which life only can atone." And amongst men of worldly honor, duel is undoubtedly the result of the lie given and received. Consequently, the interests of truth are placed under the secure guardianship of fear on great occasions. But it is not so on daily and more common ones; and the man who would thus fatally resent the imputation of falsehood, does not even reprove the lie of convenience in his wife and children, nor refrain from being guilty of it himself: he will often, perhaps, be the bearer of a lie to excuse them from keeping a disagreeable engagement; and will not scruple to make lying apologies for some negligence of his own. But is Dr. Hawkesworth right in saying that offenders like *these* are shunned and despised? Certainly not; nor are they even *self-reprobated*, nor would they be censured by others if their falsehood were detected. Yet are they not liars? and is the lie imputed to them (in resentment of which imputation they were willing to risk their life, and the life of another) a greater breach of the *moral law*, than the little lies which they are so willing to tell? and who, that is known to tell lies on trivial occasions, has a right to resent the imputation of lying on great ones? Whatever flattering unction we may lay to our souls, there is only one wrong and one right; and I repeat, that, as those

servants who pilfer groceries only are with justice called thieves, because they have thereby shown that the principle of honesty is not in them, so may the utterers of little lies be with justice called liars, because they equally show that they are strangers to the restraining and immutable principle of truth.

Hawkesworth says that "indirect lies more effectually destroy mutual confidence, that band of society, than any others;" and I fully agree with him in his idea of the "great turpitude and greater meanness of those forms of speech which deceive without direct falsehood;" but I cannot agree with him that these deviations from truth are "*universally infamous*:" on the contrary, they are even scarcely reckoned a fault at all; their very frequency prevents them from being censured, and they are often considered both necessary and justifiable.

In that touching and useful tale by which Hawkesworth illustrates the pernicious effect of *indirect* as well as direct lies, "a lie put into the mouth of a chairman, and another lie, accompanied by WITHHOLDING OF THE WHOLE TRUTH, are the occasion of duel and of death."

And what were these lies, direct and indirect, active and passive? . Simply these. The bearer of a note is desired to *say* that he comes from a *milliner*, when, in reality, he comes from a lady in the neighborhood; and one of the principal actors in the story leaves word that he is gone to a coffee-house, when, in point of fact, he is gone to a friend's house. That friend, on being



questioned by him, *withholds* or conceals part of the truth, meaning to *deceive*; the wife of the questioner *does the same*; and thus, though both are innocent, even in thought, of any thing offensive to the strictest propriety, they become involved in the fatal consequences of imputed guilt, from which a disclosure of the whole truth would at once have preserved them.

Now, I would ask if there be any thing *more common* in the daily affairs of life, than those *very lies* and dissimulations which I have selected?

Who has not given, or heard given, this order: "Do not say where you came from;" and often accompanied by, "If you are asked, say you do not know, or you came from *such* a place?" Who do not frequently conceal where they have been; and while they own to the questioner that they have been to such a place, and seen such a person, *keep back* the information that they *have been* to another place, and seen another person, though they are very conscious that the two latter were the *real* objects of the *inquiry* made?

Some may reply, "Yes: I do these things every day perhaps, and so does every one; and where is the harm of it? You cannot be so absurd as to believe that such innocent lies, and a concealment such as I have a *right* to indulge in, will certainly be visited by consequences like those imagined by a writer of fiction!"

I answer, No; but though I cannot be *sure* that *fatal* consequences will be the result of that IMPOSSIBLE thing, an INNOCENT LIE, some consequences attend on *all* deviations from truth, which

it were better to avoid. In the first place, the lying order given to a servant, or *inferior*, not only lowers the standard of truth in the mind of the person so commanded, but it *lowers* the person who GIVES it: it weakens that *salutary respect* with which the lower orders regard the higher. Servants and inferiors are shrewd observers; and those domestics who detect a laxity of morals in their employers, and find that they do not hold truth sacred, but are ready to teach others to lie for their service, deprive themselves of their best claims to respect and obedience from them, that of a deep conviction of their MORAL SUPERIORITY. And they who discover in their intimate friends and associates a systematic habit, an assumed and exercised right of telling only as *much of the truth as suits their inclinations and purposes*, must feel their confidence in them most painfully destroyed; and listen, in future, to their disclosures and communications with unavoidable suspicion and degrading distrust.

The account given by Boswell of the regard paid by Dr. Johnson to truth on all occasions, furnishes us with a still better shield against deviations from it, than can be afforded even by the best and most *moral fiction*. For as Longinus was said "to be himself the great sublime he draws," so Johnson was himself the great example of the benefit of those precepts which he lays down for the edification of others; and, what is still more useful and valuable to us, he proves that however difficult it may be to speak the truth and to be accurate on all occasions, it is certainly

*possible*; for, as Johnson could do it, why cannot others? It requires not his force of intellect to enable us to follow his example: all that is necessary is a knowledge of right and wrong, a reverence for truth, and an abhorrence of deceit

Such was Johnson's *known* habit of telling the truth, that even improbable things were believed, if *he* narrated them! Such was the respect for truth which his practice of it excited, and such the beneficial influence of his example, that all his intimate companions "were distinguished for a love of truth and accuracy," *derived* from association with him.

I can never read this account of our great moralist without feeling my heart glow with EMULATION and TRIUMPH! With emulation, because I know that it must be my own fault if I become not as habitually the votary of truth as he himself was; and with triumph, because it is a complete refutation of the commonplace arguments against enforcing the necessity of spontaneous truth, that it is *absolutely impossible*; and that, if *possible*, what would be gained by it?

What would be gained by it? Society at large would, in the end, gain a degree of safety and purity far beyond what it has hitherto known; and, in the meanwhile, the individuals who speak truth would obtain a prize worthy the highest aspirings of earthly ambition—the constant and involuntary confidence and reverence of their fellow-creatures.

The consciousness of truth and ingenuousness gives a radiance to the countenance, a freedom to

the play of the lips, a persuasion to the voice, and a graceful dignity to the person, which no other quality of mind can equally bestow. And who is not able to recollect the direct contrast to this picture exhibited by the conscious utterer of falsehood and disingenuousness? Who has not observed the downcast eye, the snapping, restless eyelid, the changing color, and the hoarse, impeded voice, which sometimes contradict what the hesitating lip utters, and stamp, on the positive assertion, the undoubted evidence of deceit and insincerity?

Those who make up the usual mass of society are, when tempted to its common dissimulations, like little boats on the ocean, which are continually forced to shift sail, and row away from danger; or, if obliged to await it, are necessitated, from want of power, to get on one side of the billow, instead of directly meeting it: while the firm votaries of truth, when exposed to the temptations of falsehood, proceed undaunted along the direct course, like the majestic vessel, coming boldly and directly on, breasting the waves in conscious security, and inspiring confidence in all whose well-being is intrusted to them. Is it not a delightful sensation to feel and to inspire confidence? Is it not delightful to know, when we lie down at night, that, however darkness may envelop us, the sun will undoubtedly rise again, and chase away the gloom? True, he may rise in clouds, and his usual splendor may not shine out upon us during the whole diurnal revolution; still, we know that, though there be not sunshine, there will be light, and we

betake ourselves to our couch, confiding in the assurances of past experience, that day will succeed to night, and light to darkness. But is it not equally delightful to feel this cheering confidence in the moral system of the circle in which we move? And can any thing inspire it so much as the constant habit of truth in those with whom we live? To know that we have friends on whom we can always rely for honest counsel, ingenuous reproof, and sincere sympathy,—to whom we can look with never-doubting confidence in the night of our soul's despondency, knowing that they will rise on us like the cheering, never-failing light of day, speaking unwelcome truths, perhaps, but speaking them with tenderness and discretion,—is, surely, one of the dearest comforts which this world can give. It is the most precious of the earthly staffs permitted to support us as we go, trembling, short-sighted, and weary pilgrims, along the checkered path of human existence.

And is it not an ambition worthy of thinking and responsible beings to endeavor to qualify ourselves, and those whom we love, to *be* such friends as these? And if habits of unblemished truth will bestow this qualification, were it not wise to labor hard in order to attain them, undaunted by difficulty, undeterred by the sneers of worldlings, who cannot believe in the possibility of that moral excellence which they feel themselves unable to obtain?

To you, O ye parents and preceptors, I particularly address myself. Guard your own lips from "speaking leasing," that the quickly discerning



child or servant may not, in self-defence, set the force of your example against that of your precepts. If each individual family would seriously resolve to avoid every species of falsehood themselves, whether authorized by custom or not, and would visit every deviation from truth, in those accused, with punishment and disgrace, the example would unceasingly spread; for, even now, wherever the beauty of truth is seen, its influence is immediately felt, and its value acknowledged. Individual efforts, however humble, if firm and repeated, must be ultimately successful; as the feeble mouse in the fable was, at last, enabled by its perseverance to gnaw the cords asunder which held the mighty lion. Difficult, I own, would such general purification be; but what is impossible to zeal and enterprise?

Hercules, as fabulous but instructive story tells us, when he was required to perform the apparently impossible task of cleansing the Augean stables, exerted all his strength, and turned the course of a river through them to effect his purpose, proving by his success that nothing is impossible to perseverance and exertion; and however long the duration and wide-spreading the pollutions of falsehood and dissimulation in the world, there is a river which, if suffered to flow over their impurities, is powerful enough to wash away every stain, since it flows from the "FOUNTAIN OF EVER-LIVING WATERS."



## CHAPTER XVI.

## RELIGION THE ONLY BASIS OF TRUTH.

ALL the moralists from whom I have quoted, and those on whom I have commented in the preceding chapters, have treated the subject of truth as moralists only. They do not lay it down as an indisputable fact, that truth, as a principle of action, is obligatory on us all, in enjoined obedience to the clear dictates of revealed religion. Therefore, they have kept out of sight the strongest motive to abhor lying, and cleave unto truth—OBEDIENCE TO THE DIVINE WILL: yet as necessary as were the shield and the buckler to the ancient warriors, is the “breastplate of faith” to the cause of spontaneous truth. It has been asserted that morality might exist in all its power and purity, were there no such thing as religion, since it is conducive to the earthly interests and happiness of man. But are moral motives sufficient to protect us in times of particular temptations? There appears to me the same difference between morality, unprotected by religious motives, and morality derived from them, as between the palace of ice, famous in Russian story, and a castle built of ever-enduring stone: perfect to the eye, and as if formed to last for ever, was the building of frost-work, ornamented and lighted up for the pleasure of the sovereign; but it melted

away before the power of natural and artificial warmth, and was quickly resolved to the element from which it sprang. But the castle formed of stones, joined together by a strong and enduring cement, is proof against all assailment; and even though it may be occasionally shattered by the enemies, it still towers in its grandeur, indestructible though impaired. In like manner, unassailable and perfect in appearance may be the virtue of the mere moralist; but when assailed by the warmth of the passions on one side, and by different enemies on the other, his virtue, like the palace of ice, is likely to melt away, and be as though it had not been. But the virtue of the truly religious man, even though it may on occasion be slightly shaken, is yet proof against any important injury; and remains, spite of temptation and danger, in its original purity and power. The moral man *may*, therefore, utter spontaneous truth, but the *religious* man *must*; for he remembers the following precepts, which, amongst others, he has learned from the Scriptures, and knows that to speak lies is displeasing to the GOD OF TRUTH.

In the 6th chapter of Leviticus, the Lord threatens the man "who lies to his neighbor, and who deceives his neighbor." Again, he says, "Ye shall not deal falsely, neither lie to one another." We read in the Psalms that "the Lord will destroy those who speak leasing." He is said to be angry with the wicked every day, who have conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood. "He that worketh deceit," says the

Psalmist, "shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." The Saviour, in the 8th chapter of John, calls the Devil "a liar, and the father of lies." Paul, in the 3d chapter of Colossians, says, "Lie not one to another!" Prov. vi. 19: "The Lord hates a false witness that speaketh lies." Prov. xix. 9: "And he that speaketh lies shall perish." Prov. xix. 22: "A poor man is better than a liar." James iii. 14: "Lie not against the truth." Isaiah xxviii. 17: "The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies." Psalm xxxi. 18: "Let the lying lips be put to silence." Psalm cxix. 29: "Remove from me the way of lying." Psalm lxiii. 11: "The mouth that speaketh lies shall be stopped." The fate of Gehazi, in the 5th chapter of the second book of Kings, who lied to the prophet Elisha, and went out of his presence "a leper as white as snow;" and the judgment on Ananias and Sapphira, in the 5th chapter of Acts—on the former for WITHHOLDING THE TRUTH, INTENDING TO DECEIVE, and on the latter for telling a DIRECT LIE—are awful proofs how hateful falsehood is in the sight of the Almighty; and that, though the seasons of his immediate judgments may be past, his vengeance against every species of falsehood is tremendously certain.

But though, as I have stated more than once, all persons, even those who are most negligent of truth, exclaim continually against lying; and liars cannot forgive the slightest imputation against their veracity; still, few are willing to admit that telling lies of courtesy, or convenience, is lying;

or that the occasional violator of truth, for what are called innocent purposes, ought to be considered as a liar; and *thence* the universal falsehood which prevails. And, surely, that moral precept which every one claims a right to violate according to his wants and wishes, loses its restraining power, and is, as I have before observed, for all its original purposes, wholly annihilated.

But as that person has no right to resent being called a sloven who goes about in a stained garment, though that stain be a single one; so that being who allows himself to indulge in any one species of lie, cannot declare with justice that he deserves not the name of a liar. The general voice and tenor of Scripture say, "Lie not at all." This may appear a command very difficult to obey, but he who gave it has given us a still more appalling one: "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." Yet, surely, he would never have given a command impossible for us to fulfil. However, be that as it may, we are to try to fulfil it. The drawing-master who would form a pupil to excellence, does not set incorrect copies before him, but the most perfect models of immortal art; and that tyro who is awed into doing nothing by the perfection of his model, is not more weak than those who persevere in the practice of lying by the seeming *impossibility* of constantly telling the truth. The pupil may never be able to copy the model set before him, because his aids are only human and earthly ones. But He who hath said that "as our day our strength shall be;" He whose ear is open to the softest

cry; He whom the royal Psalmist called upon to deliver him from those "whose mouth speaketh vanity, and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood;" this pure, this powerful, this perfect Being, still lives to listen to the supplications of all who trust *in Him*; and will, in the hour of temptation to utter falsehood and deceit, strengthen them out of Zion.

In all other times of danger, the believer supplicates the Lord to grant him force to resist temptation; but who ever thinks of supplicating him to be enabled to resist daily temptation to what is called little, or *white lying*? Yet has the Lord revealed to us what species of lying he tolerates, and what he reproves? Does he tell us that we may tell the lie of courtesy and convenience, but avoid all others? The lying of Ananias was only the passive lie of concealing that he had kept back part of *his own property*, yet he was punished with instant death! The only safety is in believing, or remembering, that all lying and insincerity whatever is rebellion against the revealed will of the great God of Truth; and they who so believe, or remember, are prepared for the strongest attacks of the soul's adversary, "that Devil, who is the father of lies;" for their weapons are derived from the armory of heaven; their steps are guided by light from the sanctuary; and the cleansing river by which they are enabled to drive away all the pollutions of falsehood and deceit, is that pure river of "the water of life, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb."



I trust that I have not in any of the preceding pages underrated the difficulty of always speaking the truth: I have only *denied* that it is *impossible* to do so, and I have pointed out the only means by which the possibility of resisting the temptation to utter falsehood might be secured to us on all occasions; namely, religious motives derived from obedience to the will of God.

Still, in order to prove how well aware I am of the difficulty in question, I shall venture to bring forward some distinguished instances on record of holy men, who were led by the fear of death and other motives to lie against their consciences; thereby exhibiting, beyond a doubt, the difficulty of a constant adherence to the practice of sincerity. But they also prove that the real Christian must be miserable under a consciousness of having violated the truth; and that to escape from the most poignant of all pangs, the pang of self-reproach, the delinquents in question sought for refuge from their remorse by courting that very death which they had endeavored to escape from by being guilty of falsehood. They at the same time furnish convincing proofs that it is in the power of the sincere penitent to retrace his steps, and be reinstated in the height of virtue whence he has fallen, if he will humble himself before the great Being whom he has offended, and call upon Him who can alone save to the uttermost.

My first three examples are taken from the martyred reformers, who were guilty of the most awful species of lying, in signing recantations of their opinions, even when their belief in them re-



mained unchanged ; but who, as I have before observed, were compelled by the power of that word of God, written on the depth of the secret heart, to repent with agonizing bitterness of their apostasy from truth, and to make a public reparation for their short-lived error, by a death of patient suffering, and even of rejoicing.

JEROME OF PRAGUE comes first upon the list. He was born at the close of the thirteenth century ; and in the year 1415, after having spent his youth in the pursuit of knowledge at the greatest universities in Europe—namely, those of Prague, Paris, Heidelberg, and Cologne—we find him visiting Oxford, at which place he became acquainted with the works of Wycliffe ; and, at his return to Prague, he not only professed himself an open favorer of the doctrines of that celebrated reformer, but finding that John Huss was at the head of Wycliffe's party in Bohemia, he attached himself immediately to that powerful leader. It were unnecessary for me to follow him through the whole of his polemical career, as it is the close of it only which is fitted for my purpose : suffice, that having been brought before the Council of Constance, in the year 1415, to answer for what they deemed his heresies, a thousand voices called out, even after his first examination, "Away with him ! burn him ! burn him ! burn him !" On which, little doubting that his power and virtuous resistance could ever fail him in time of need, Jerome replied, looking round on the assembly with dignity and confidence, "Since nothing can satisfy you but my blood, God's will be done !"

Severities of a most uncommon nature were now inflicted on him, in order to constrain him to recant, a point of which the council were excessively desirous. So rigorous was his confinement, that at length it brought upon him a dangerous illness, in the course of which he entreated to have a confessor sent to him; but he was given to understand that only on certain terms would this indulgence be granted; notwithstanding, he remained immovable. The next attempt on his faithfulness was after the martyrdom of Huss: when all its affecting and appalling details were made known to him, he listened, however, without emotion, and answered in language so resolute and determined, that they had certainly no hope of his *sudden* conversion. But whether, too confident in his own strength, he neglected to seek, as he had hitherto done, that only strength "which cometh from above," it is certain that his constancy at length gave way. "He withstood," says Gilpin, in his *Lives of the Reformers*, "the simple fear of death; but imprisonment, chains, hunger, sickness, and torture, through a succession of months, was more than human nature could bear; and though he still made a noble stand for the truth, when brought three times before the infuriated council, he began at last to waver, and to talk obscurely of his having misunderstood the tendency of some of the writings of Huss. Promises and threats were now redoubled upon him, till, at last, he read aloud an ample recantation of all the opinions that he had recently entertained, and declared himself in every

article a firm believer with the Church of Rome."

But with a heavy heart he retired from the council: chains were removed from his body, but his mind was corroded by chains of his conscience, and his soul was burdened with a load, till then unknown to it. Hitherto, the light of an approving conscience had cheered the gloom of his dungeon, but now all was dark to him both without and within.

But in this night of his moral despair, the day-spring from on high was again permitted to visit him, and the penitent was once more enabled to seek assistance from his God. Jerome had long been apprised that he was to be brought to a second trial, upon some new evidence which had appeared; and this was his only consolation in the midst of his painful penitence. At length, the moment so ardently desired by him arrived; and, rejoicing at an opportunity of publicly retracting his errors, and deploring his unworthy falsehood, he eagerly obeyed the summons to appear before the council in the year 1416. There, after delivering an oration, which was, it is said, a model of pathetic eloquence, he ended by declaring before the whole assembly, "that though the fear of death, and the prevalence of human infirmity, had induced him to retract those opinions with his lips which had drawn on him the anger and vengeance of the council, yet they were *then* and *still* the opinions near and dear to his heart, and that he solemnly declared they were opinions in which he alone believed, and for which he was ready and

even glad to die." "It was expected," says Pogge, the Florentine, who was present at his examination, "that he would have retracted his errors; or, at least, have apologized for them; but he plainly declared that he had nothing to retract." After launching forth into the most eloquent encomiums on Huss, declaring him to be a wise and holy man, and lamenting his unjust and cruel death, he avowed that he had armed himself with a firm resolution to follow the steps of that blessed martyr, and suffer with constancy whatever the malice of his enemies should inflict; and he was mercifully enabled to keep his resolution.

When brought to the stake, and when the wood was beginning to blaze, he sang a hymn, which he continued with great fervency, till the fury of the fire scorching him, he was heard to cry out, "O Lord God! have mercy on me!" and a little afterward, "Thou knowest," he cried, "how I have loved thy truth;" and he continued to exhibit a spectacle of intense suffering, made bearable by as intense devotion, till the vital spark was in mercy permitted to expire; and the contrite but then triumphant spirit was allowed to return unto the God who gave it.

THOMAS BILNEY, the next on my list, "was brought up from a child (says Fox, in his Acts and Monuments) in the University of Cambridge, profiting in all kind of liberal sciences, even unto the profession of both laws. But, at the last, having gotten a better schoolmaster, even the Holy Spirit of Christ enduing his heart by privie inspiration with the knowledge of better and

more wholesome things, he came unto this point, that, forsaking the knowledge of man's laws, he converted his studie to those things which tended more unto godlinesse than gainfulnesse. At the last, Bilney, forsaking the universitie, went into many places teaching and preaching, being associate with Thomas Arthur, which accompanied him from the universitie. The authoritie of Thomas Wolsey, Cardinal of York, at that time was greate in England, but his temper and pride much greater, which did evidently declare unto all wise men the manifest vanitie, not only of his life, but also of all the bishops and clergie; whereupon, Bilney, with other good men, marveling at the incredible insolence of the clergie, which they could no longer suffer or abide, began to shake and reprove this excessive pompe, and also to pluck at the authority of the Bishop of Rome."

It therefore became necessary that the Cardinal should rouse himself and look about him. A chapter being held at Westminster for the occasion, Thomas Bilney, with his friends, Thomas Arthur and Hugh Latimer, were brought before them. Gilpin says, "That, as Bilney was considered as the Heresiarch, the rigor of the court was chiefly levelled against him. The principal persons at this time concerned in ecclesiastical affairs, besides Cardinal Wolsey, were Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Tunstall, Bishop of London." The latter was, of all the prelates of these times, the most deservedly esteemed, "as he was not influenced by the spirit of Popery,

and had just notions of the mild genius of Christianity ;” but every deposition against Bilney was enlarged upon with such unrelenting bitterness, that Tunstall, though the president of the court, despaired of being able to soften, by his influence, the enraged proceedings of his colleagues. And when the process came to an end, “Bilney, declaring himself what they called an obstinate heretic, was found guilty.” Tunstall now proved the kindness of his heart. He could not come forward in Bilney’s favor by a judicial interference, but he labored to save him by all means in his power. “He first set his friends upon him to persuade him to recant; and when that would not do, he joined his entreaties to theirs; had patience with him day after day, and begged he would not oblige him, contrary to his inclinations, to treat him with severity.”

The man whom fear was not able to move, was not proof against the language of affectionate persuasion. “Bilney could not withstand the winning rhetoric of Tunstall, though he withstood the menaces of Warham.” He therefore recanted, bore a faggot on his shoulders in the cathedral church of Paul, bareheaded, according to the custom of the times, and was dismissed with Latimer and the others, who had met with milder treatment and easier terms.”

The liberated heretics, as they were called, returned directly to Cambridge, where they were received with open arms by their friends; but in the midst of this joy, Bilney kept aloof, bearing on his countenance the marks of internal



suffering and incessant gloom. "He received the congratulations of his officious friends with confusion and blushes:" he had sinned against his God, therefore he could neither be gratified nor cheered by the affection of any earthly being. In short, his mind at length preying on itself, nearly disturbed his reason, and his friends dared not allow him to be left alone, either by night or day. They tried to comfort him; but they tried in vain; and when they endeavored to soothe him by certain texts of Scripture, "it was as though a man would run him through with a sword." In the agonies of his despair, he uttered pathetic and eager accusations of his friends, of Tunstall, and, above all, of himself. At length, his violence having had its course, it subsided, by degrees, into a state of profound melancholy. In this state he continued from the year 1629 to 1631, "reading much, avoiding company, and, in all respects, preserving the severity of an ascetic."

It is interesting to observe in how many different ways our soul's adversary deals with us, in order to allure us to perdition; and he is never so successful as when he can make the proffered sin assume the appearance of what is amiable. This seems to have been the case with the self-judged Bilney. To the fear of death, and the menaces of Warham, we are told that he opposed a resolution and an integrity which could not be overcome; but the gentle entreaties of affection, and the tender persuasive eloquence of Tunstall,

had power to conquer his love of truth, and make the pleadings of conscience vain; while he probably looked upon his yielding as a proof of affectionate gratitude; and that not to consider the feelings of those who loved him would have been offensive, and ungrateful hardness of heart.

But whatever were his motives to sin, that sin was indeed visited with remorse as unquestionable as it was efficacious; and it is pleasant to turn from the contemplation of Bilney's frailty, to that of its exemplary and courted expiation.

The consequences of this salutary period of sorrow and seclusion were, that after having, for some time, thrown out hints that he was meditating an extraordinary design—after saying that he was almost prepared, that he would shortly go up to Jerusalem, and that God must be glorified in him; and keeping his friends in painful suspense by this mysterious language—he told them at last that he was fully determined to expiate his late shameful abjuration—that *wicked lie* against his conscience, by death.

There can be no doubt that his friends again interposed to shake his resolution; but that Being who had lent a gracious ear to the cry of his penitence and his agony, “girded up his loins for the fight,” and enabled him to sacrifice every human affection at the foot of the cross, and strengthened him to take up that cross, and bear it, unfainting, to the end. He therefore broke from all his Cambridge ties, and set out for Norfolk, the place of his nativity, and

which, for that reason, he chose to make the place of his death.

When he arrived there, he preached openly in fields, confessing his fault, and preaching publicly that doctrine which he had before abjured, to be the **VERY TRUTH**, and willed all men to beware by him, and never to trust to their *fleshly friends in causes of religion*; and so setting forward in his journey toward the celestial Jerusalem, he departed from thence to the Anchresse in Norwich, (whom he had converted to Christ,) and there gave her a New Testament of Tindale's translation, and "the obedience of a Christian man;" whereupon he was apprehended, and carried to prison.

Nixe, (the blind Bishop Nixe, as Fox calls him,) the then Bishop of Norwich, was a man of a fierce inquisitorial spirit, and he lost no time in sending up for a writ to burn him.

In the meanwhile, great pains were taken by divers religious persons to reconvert him to what his assailants believed to be the truth; but he having "planted himselfe upon the firm rocke of God's word, was at a point, and so continued to the end."

While Bilney lay in the county jail, waiting the arrival of the writ for his execution, he entirely recovered from that melancholy which had so long oppressed him; and, "like an honest man who had long lived under a difficult debt, he began to resume his spirits when he thought himself in a situation to discharge it."—*Gilpin's Lives of the Reformers*, p. 358.

“Some of his friends found him taking a hearty supper the night before his execution, and expressing their surprise, he told them he was but doing what they had daily examples of in common life—he was only keeping his cottage in repair while he continued to inhabit it.” The same composure ran through his whole behavior, and his conversation was more agreeable that evening than they had ever remembered it to be.

Some of his friends put him in mind “that though the fire which he should suffer the next day should be of great heat unto his body, yet the comfort of God’s Spirit should coole it to his everlasting refreshing.” At this word the said Thomas Bilney, putting his hand toward the flame of the candle burning before them, (as he also did divers times besides,) and feeling the heat thereof, “O!” said he, “I feel by experience, and have knowne it long by philosophie, that fire by God’s ordinance is naturally hot; but yet I am persuaded by God’s holy word, and by the experience of some spoken of in the same, that in the flame they felt no heate, and in the fire they felt no consumption; and I constantly believe that, howsoever the stubble of this my bodie shall be wasted by it, yet my soule and spirit shall be purged thereby: a paine for the time, whereon, notwithstanding, followeth joy unspeakable.” He then dwelt much upon a passage in Isaiah: “Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, and called thee by thy name. Thou art mine own: when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: when thou

walkest in the fire, it shall not burn thee, and the flame shall not kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel."

"He was led to the place of execution\* with-

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\* "In the Lollard's pit, I find that many persons of a sect known by the name of Lollards, in the city of Norwich, were thrown, after being burnt, in the year 1424, and for many years afterwards; and thence it was called the *Lollard's pit*; and the following account of the meaning of the term Lollard may not be unacceptable. Soon after the commencement of the 14th century, the famous sect of the Cellite brethren and sisters arose at Antwerp: they were also styled the Alexian brethren and sisters, because St. Alexius was their patron; and they were named Cellites, from the cells in which they were accustomed to live. As the clergy of this age took little care of the sick and the dying, and deserted such as were infected with those pestilential disorders which were then very frequent, some compassionate and pious persons at Antwerp formed themselves into a society for the performance of those religious offices which the sacerdotal orders so shamefully neglected. In the prosecution of this agreement, they visited and comforted the sick, assisted the dying with their prayers and exhortations, took care of the interment of those who were cut off by the plague, and on that account forsaken by the terrified clergy, and committed them to the grave with a *solemn funeral dirge*. It was with reference to this last office that the common people gave them the name of *Lollards*. The term Lollhard, or Lullhard, or, as the ancient Germans wrote it, Lollert, Lullert, is compounded of the old German word lullen, lollan, or lallen, and the well-known termination of hard, with which many of the old High Dutch words end. Lollen, or Lullen, signifies to sing with a low voice. It is yet used in the same sense among the English, who say *lulla sleep*, which signifies to sing any one into a slumber with a sweet indistinct voice.

out the citie gate, called Bishop's gate, in a low valley, commonly called the Lollard's pit, under Saint Leonard's hill. At the coming forth of the said Thomas Bilney out of the prison doore, one of his friends came to him, and, with few words as he durst, spake to him, and prayed him, in God's behalf, to be constant, and to take his death as patiently as he could. Whereunto the said Bilney answered, with a quiet and mild countenance,

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"Lollhard, therefore, is a singer, or one who frequently sings. For as the word *beggen*, which universally signifies to request any thing fervently, is applied to devotional requests, or prayers, so the word *lollen* or *lallen* is transferred from a common to a sacred song, and signifies, in its most limited sense, to sing a hymn. Lollhard, therefore, in the vulgar tongue of the ancient Germans, denotes a person who is continually praising God with a song, or singing hymns to his honor.

"And as prayers and hymns are regarded as an external sign of piety towards God, those who were more frequently employed in singing hymns of praise to God than others, were, in the common popular language, called Lollhards.

"But the priests and monks, being inveterately exasperated against these good men, endeavored to persuade the people that, innocent and beneficent as the Lollards appeared to be, they were tainted with the most pernicious sentiments of a religious kind, and secretly addicted to all sorts of vices; hence the name of Lollard at length became infamous. Thus, by degrees, it came to pass, that any person who covered heresies, or crimes, under the appearance of piety, was called a Lollard; so that this was not a name to denote any one particular sect, but was formerly common to all persons and all sects who were supposed to be guilty of impiety toward God and the Church, under an external profession of extraordinary piety."—*Maclane's Eccles. History*, pp. 355–6.



‘Ye see when the mariner is entered into his ship to saile on the troublous sea, how he is for a while tossed in the billows of the same; but yet, in hope that he shall come to the quiet haven, he beareth in better comfort the perils which he feel-eth: so am I now toward this sayling; and whatsoever stormes I shall feele, yet shortly after shall my ship be in the haven, as I doubt not thereof, by the grace of God, desiring you to helpe me with your prayers to the same effect.’”

While he kneeled upon a little ledge coming out of the stake, upon which he was afterward to stand, that he might be better seen, he made his private prayers with such earnest elevation of his eyes and hands to heaven, “and in so good quiet behavior, that he seemed not much to consider the terror of his death;” ending his prayer with the 143d Psalm, in which he repeated this verse thrice: “Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord! for in thy sight shall no man living be justified;” and so finishing the psalm, he concluded. “Nor did that God in whom he trusted forsake him in the hour of his need: while the flames raged around him, he held up his hands and knocked upon his breast, crying ‘Jesus,’ and sometimes ‘Credo,’ till he gave up the ghost; and his body being withered, bowed downward, upon the chaine, while, triumphing over death, (to use the words of the poet laureate,) he rendered up his soul in the fulness of faith, and entered into his reward.”

“So exemplary,” says Bloomfield, in his History of Norwich, “was Bilney’s life and conversation,

that when Nixe, his persecutor, was constantly told how holy and upright he was, he said he feared that he had burnt *Abel*."

I have recently visited the Lollard's pit—that spot where my interesting martyred countryman met his dreadful death. The top of the hill retains, probably, much the same appearance as it had when he perished at its foot; and, without any great exertion of fancy, it would have been easy for me to figure to myself the rest of the scene, could I have derived sufficient comfort from the remembrance of the fortitude with which he bore his sufferings, to reconcile me to the contemplation of them. Still, it is, I believe, salutary to visit the places hallowed in the memory, as marked by any exhibition of virtuous acts and sufferings endured for the sake of conscience. To the scaffold, and to the stake, on account of their religious opinions, it is humbly to be hoped that Christians will never again be brought. But all persecution on the score of religion is, in a degree, an infliction of martyrdom on the mind and on the heart. It matters not that we forbear to kill the body of the Christian, if we afflict the soul by aught of a persecuting spirit.

Yet does not our daily experience testify that there is nothing which calls forth petty persecutions, and the mean warfare of a detracting spirit, so much as any marked religious profession?

And while such a profession is assailed by ridicule on the one hand, by distrust of its motives on the other; while it exposes the serious Christian, converted from the errors of former days, to the

stigma of wild enthusiasm, or of religious hypocrisy; who shall say that the persecuting spirit of the Lauds and the Bonners is not still the spirit of the world? Who shall say to the tried and shrinking souls of those who, on account of their having made a religious profession, are thus calumniated and thus judged, the time of martyrdom is over, and we live in mild, and liberal, and truly Christian days?

Such were the thoughts uppermost in my mind while I stood, perhaps, on the very spot where Bilney suffered and where Bilney died; and though I rejoiced to see that the harmless employment of the lime-burner had succeeded to the frightful burning of the human form, I could not but sigh as I turned away, while I remembered that so much of an intolerant, uncandid spirit still prevailed among professed Christians, and that the practice of persecution still existed, though applied in a very different manner. I could not but think that many of the present generation might do well to visit scenes thus fraught with the recollection of martyrdom. If it be true that "our love of freedom would burn brighter on the plains of Marathon," and that our devotion "must glow more warmly amidst the ruins of Iona," sure am I that the places where the martyrs for conscience's sake have passed through the portals of fire and agony to their God, must assist in bestowing on us power to endure with fortitude the mental martyrdom which may, unexpectedly, become our portion in life; and by recalling the sufferings of others, we may, meekly bowing to the hand that

afflicts us for good, be in time enabled to bear, and even to love, our own.

The last, and third on my list, is THOMAS CRANMER, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was promoted to that see by the favor of Henry the Eighth, and degraded from it in consequence of his heretical opinions, by virtue of an order from the sovereign pontiff, in the réign of Queen Mary.

“The ceremony of his degradation,” says Gilpin, which took place at Oxford, “was performed by Thirlby, Bishop of Ely, a man recently converted, it should seem, to Catholicism; who, in Cranmer’s better days, had been honored with his particular friendship, and owed him many obligations.

“As this man, therefore, had long been so much attached to the Archbishop, it was thought proper by his new friends that he should give an extraordinary test of his zeal: for this reason the ceremony of his degradation was committed to him. He had undertaken, however, too hard a task. The mild benevolence of the primate, which shone forth with great dignity, though he stood in the mock grandeur of canvas robes, struck the old apôstate to the heart. All the past came throbbing to his breast, and a few repentant tears began to trickle down the furrows of his aged cheek. The archbishop gently exhorted him not to suffer his private to overpower his public affections. At length, one by one, the canvas trappings were taken off, amidst the taunts and exultations of Bonner, Bishop of London, who was present at the ceremony.

“Thus degraded, he was attired in a plain frieze

gown, the common habit of a yeoman at that period, and had what was then called a townsman's cap put upon his head. In this garb he was carried back to prison, Bonner crying after him, 'He is now no longer my lord! he is now no longer my lord!' "—*Gilpin's Lives of the Reformers*.

I know not what were Cranmer's feelings at these expressions of mean exultation from the contemptible Bonner; but I trust that he treated them, and the ceremony of degradation at the time, with the indifference which they merited. Perhaps, too, he might utter within himself this serious and important truth, that none of us can ever be truly *degraded*, but by *ourselves alone*; and this moment of his external humiliation was, in the eyes of all whose esteem was worth having, one of triumph and honor to the bereaved ecclesiastic. But what, alas! were those which succeeded to it? That period, and that alone, was the period of his real degradation, when, overcome by the flatteries and the kindness of his real and seeming friends, and subdued by the entertainments given him, the amusements offered him, and allowed to indulge in the "lust of the eye and the pride of life," he was induced to lend a willing ear to the proposal of being reinstated in his former dignity, on condition that he would conform to the present change of religion, and "gratify the queen by being wholly a Catholic!"

The adversary of man lured Cranmer, as well as Bilney, by the unsuspected influence of mild and amiable feelings, rather than the instigations of fear; and he who was armed to resist, to the

utmost, the rage and malice of his enemies, was drawn aside from truth and duty by the suggestions of false friends.

After the confinement of a full year in the gloomy walls of a prison, his sudden return into social intercourse dissipated his firm resolves. That love of life returned, which he had hitherto conquered; and when a paper was offered to him, importing his assent to the tenets of Popery, his better resolutions gave way, and in an evil hour he signed the fatal scroll!

Cranmer's recantation was received by the popish party with joy beyond expression; but, as all they wanted was to blast the reputation of a man whose talents, learning and virtue were of such great importance to the cause which he espoused, they had no sooner gained what they desired, than their thirst for his blood returned, and, though he was kept in ignorance of the fate which awaited him, a warrant was ordered for his execution with all possible expedition.

But long before the certainty of his approaching fate was made known to him, the self-convicted culprit sighed for the joy and the serenity which usually attend the last days of a martyr for the truth which he loves.

Vainly did his friends throw over his faults the balm afforded by those healing words, "The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak." In his own clear judgment he was fully convicted, while his days were passed in horror and remorse, and his nights in sleepless anguish.

To persevere in his recantation was an insup-



portable thought; but to retract it was scarcely within the verge of possibility; but he was allowed an opportunity of doing so which he did not expect; and though death was the means of it, he felt thankful that it was afforded him, and deemed his life a sacrifice not to be regarded for the attainment of such an object.

When Dr. Cole, one of the heads of the popish party, came to him on the twentieth of March, the evening preceding his intended execution, and insinuated to him his approaching fate, he spent the remaining part of the evening in drawing up a full confession of his apostasy, and of his bitter repentance, wishing to take the best opportunity to speak or publish it, which he supposed would be afforded him when he was carried to the stake; but, beyond his expectation, a better was provided for him. It was intended that he should be conveyed immediately from his prison to the place of his execution, where a sermon was to be preached; but, as the morning of the appointed day was wet and stormy, the ceremony was performed under cover.

About nine o'clock, the Lord Williams of Thame, attended by the magistrates of Oxford, received him at the prison gate, and conveyed him to St. Mary's church, where he found a crowded audience awaiting him, and was conducted to an elevated place, in public view, opposite to the pulpit. If ever there was a broken and a contrite heart before God and man—if ever there was a person humbled in the very depths of his soul, from the consciousness of having committed sin, and of having deserved the extreme

of earthly shame and earthly suffering—that man was Cranmer!

He is represented as standing against a pillar, pale as the stone against which he leaned. “It is doleful,” says a popish but impartial spectator, “to describe his behavior during the sermon, part of which was addressed to him; his sorrowful countenance; his heavy cheer; his face bedewed with tears; sometimes lifting up his eyes to heaven in hope, sometimes casting them down to the earth for shame. To be brief, he was an image of sorrow. The dolour of his heart burst out continually from his eyes in gushes of tears; yet he retained ever a quiet and grave behavior, which increased pity in men’s hearts, who unfeignedly loved him, *hoping that it had been his repentance for his transgressions.*” And so it was; though not for what many considered his transgressions; but it was the deep contrition of a converted heart, and of a subdued and penitent soul, prepared by the depth of human degradation and humility to rise on the wings of angels, and meet in another world its beloved and blessed Redeemer.

The preacher having concluded his sermon, turned round to the audience, and desired all who were present to join with him in silent prayers for the unhappy man before them. A solemn stillness ensued: every eye and heart were instantly lifted up to heaven. Some minutes having been passed in this affecting manner, the degraded primate, who had also fallen on his knees, arose in all the dignity of sorrow, accompanied by conscious penitence and Christian reliance, and thus addressed

his audience: "I had myself intended to desire your prayers. My desires have been anticipated, and I return you all that a dying man can give, my sincerest thanks. To your prayers for me, let me add my own! Good Christian people!" continued he, "my dearly beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, I beseech you most heartily to pray for me to Almighty God, that he will forgive me all my sins and offences, which are many, without number, and great beyond measure. But one thing grieveth my conscience more than all the rest; whereof, God willing, I mean to speak hereafter. But how great and how many soever my sins be, I beseech you to pray God, of his mercy, to pardon and forgive them all." He then knelt down and offered up a prayer as full of pathos as of eloquence; and then took a paper from his bosom, and read it aloud, which was to the following effect:

"It is now, my brethren, no time to dissemble: I stand upon the verge of life—a vast eternity before me: what my fears are, or what my hopes, it matters not here to unfold. For one action of my life, at least, I am accountable to the world—*my late shameful subscription to opinions which are wholly opposite to my real sentiments.* Before this congregation I solemnly declare that the fear of death alone induced me to this ignominious action; that it hath cost me many bitter tears; that, in my heart, I totally reject the Pope, and doctrines of the Church of Rome, and that——"

As he was continuing his speech, the whole assembly was in an uproar. "Stop the audacious

heretic!" cried Lord Williams of Thame. On which several priests and friars, rushing from different parts of the church, seized or pulled him from his seat, dragged him into the street, and, with indecent precipitation, hurried him to the stake, which was already prepared.

As he stood with all the horrid apparatus of death around him, amidst taunts, revilings, and execrations, he alone maintained a dispassionate behavior. Having discharged his conscience, he seemed to feel, even in his awful circumstances, an inward satisfaction, to which he had long been a stranger. His countenance was not fixed, as before, in sorrow on the ground; but he looked round him with eyes full of sweetness and benignity, as if at peace with all the world.

Who can contemplate the conduct of Cranmer, in the affecting scene that followed, without feeling a deep conviction of the intensity of his penitence for the degrading lie of which he had been guilty? And who can fail to think that Cranmer, in his proudest days, when the favorite, the friend, the counsellor of a king, and bearing the highest ecclesiastical rank in the country, was far inferior in real dignity and real consequence to Cranmer, when, prostrate in soul before his offended yet pardoning God, but erect and fearless before his vindictive enemies, he thrust the hand, with which he had signed the lying scroll of his recantations, into the fast-rising flames, crying out as he did so, "This hand hath offended! this hand hath offended!"

It is soothing to reflect that his sufferings were

quickly over; for, as the fire rose fiercely round him, he was involved in a thick smoke, and it was supposed that he died very soon.

“Surely,” says the writer before quoted, “his death grieved every one: his friends sorrowed for love; his enemies for pity; and strangers through humanity.”

To us of these latter days, his crime and his penitence afford an awful warning, and an instructive example.

The former proves how vain are talents, learning, and even exalted virtues, to preserve us in the path of rectitude, unless we are watchful unto prayer, and unless, wisely distrustful of our own strength, we wholly and confidently lean upon “that Rock which is higher than we are.” And the manner in which he was enabled to declare his penitence and contrition for his falsehood and apostasy, and to bear the tortures which attended on his dying hours, is a soothing and comforting evidence that sinners who prostrate themselves with contrite hearts before the throne of their God and their Redeemer, “he will in no wise cast out,” but will know his Almighty arm to be round about them, “till death is swallowed up in victory.”

It is with a degree of fearfulness and awe that I take my fourth example from one who, relying too much on his own human strength, in his hour of human trial, was permitted to fall into the commission of human frailty, and to utter the most decided and ungrateful of falsehoods; since he that thus erred was no less a person than the

apostle Peter himself, who, by a thrice-told lie, denied his Lord and Master; but who, by his bitter tearful repentance, and by his subsequent faithfulness unto death, redeemed, in the eyes both of his Saviour and of men, his short-lived frailty, and proved himself worthy of that marked confidence in his active zeal, which was manifested by our great Redeemer in his parting words.

The character of Peter affords us a warning as well as an example; while the affectionate reproofs of the Saviour, together with the tender encouragement and generous praise which he bestowed upon him, prove to us, in a manner the most cheering and indisputable, how merciful are the dealings of the Almighty with his sinful creatures: how ready he is to overlook our offences, and to dwell with complacency on our virtues; and that "he willeth not the death of a sinner, but had rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live."

Self-confidence and self-righteousness, proceeding perhaps from his belief in the superior depth and strength of his faith in Christ, seem to have been the besetting sins of Peter; and that his faith was lively and sincere, is sufficiently evidenced by his unhesitating reply to the questions of his Lord: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!"—a reply so satisfactory to the great Being whom he addressed, that he answered him, saying, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood have not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven; and I say



unto thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

It seems as if Peter became, from this assurance, so confident in his own strength, that he neglected to follow his Master's injunction, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation;" and therefore became an easy victim to the first temptation which beset him; for soon after, with surprising confidence in his own wisdom, we find him rebuking his Lord, and asserting that the things which he prophesied concerning himself should not happen unto him. On which occasion the Saviour says, addressing the adversary of Peter's soul, then powerful within him, "Get thee behind me, Satan! thou art an offence to me!" His want of implicit faith on this occasion was the more remarkable, because he had *just before* uttered that strong avowal of his confidence in Christ, to which I have already alluded.

In an early part of the history of the Gospel, we read that Peter, beholding the miraculous draught of fishes, fell on his knees, and exclaimed, in the fulness of surprise and admiration, and in the depth of conscious sinfulness and humility, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

On a subsequent occasion, ever eager as he was to give assurances of what he believed to be his undoubting faith, we find him saying to the Saviour, when he had removed the terror of his disciples at seeing him walking on the sea, by those cheering words, "It is I, be not afraid!"—

“Lord ! if it be thou, bid me come to thee on the water !” And he walked on the water to come to Jesus ; but when he saw the wind boisterous, he *was again afraid*, and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, “Lord, save me !” Immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him, saying unto him, “O thou of *little faith*, wherefore didst thou *doubt* ?” The first of these facts shows the great sensibility of his nature, and his exemplary aptitude to acknowledge and admire every proof of the power and goodness of his Redeemer ; and the second is a further corroborating instance of his eager confidence in his own courage and belief, followed by its accustomed falling off in the hour of trial.

His unsubmitted and self-confident spirit shows itself again in his declaration that Christ should not wash his feet ; as if he still set his human wisdom against that of the Redeemer, till, subdued by the Saviour’s reply, he exclaims, “Not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.”

The next instance of the mixed character of Peter, and of the solicitude which it excited in our Saviour, is exhibited by the following address to him : “And the Lord said, Simon, Simon behold ! Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat ; but I have prayed for thee, (added the gracious Jesus,) that thy faith fail not ; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” Peter replied, in the fulness of self-confidence, “Lord, I am ready to go with thee both into prison, and to death !” And he said, “I tell thee, Peter, that before the cock

crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." It does not appear what visible effect this humiliating prophecy had on him to whom it was addressed, though Matthew says that he replied, "Though I should die with thee, still will I not deny thee;" but it is probable that by drawing his sword openly in his defence, when they came out "with swords and staves to take him," he hoped to convince his Lord of his fidelity. But this action was little better than one of mere physical courage, the result of sudden excitement at the time; and was consistent with that want of moral courage, that most difficult courage of all, which led him, when the feelings of the moment had subsided, to deny his Master, and to utter the degrading *lie of fear*. After he had thus sinned, "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter; and Peter remembered the words of the Lord, how he had said unto him, 'Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.' And Peter went out and wept bitterly."

It seems as if that self-confidence, that blind trusting in one's own strength, that tendency which we all have to believe, like Hazael, that we can never fall into certain sins, and yield to certain temptations, was conquered, for a while, in the humble, self-judged, and penitent apostle. Perhaps the look of mild reproach which the Saviour gave him was long present to his view, and that, in moments of subsequent danger to his truth, those eyes seemed again to admonish him, and those holy lips to utter the salutary

and saving precept, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

Nevertheless, rendered too confident, probably, in his own unassisted strength, we find him sinning once more in the same way—namely, from *fear of man*; for, being convinced that the Mosaic law was no longer binding on the conscience, he ate and drank freely at Antioch with the Gentiles; but when certain Jewish converts were sent to him from the Apostle James, he separated from the Gentiles, lest he should incur the censure of the Jews; being thus guilty of a sort of *practical lie*, and setting those Jews, as it proved, a most pernicious example of dissimulation; for which disingenuous conduct the Apostle Paul publicly and justly reprovved him before the whole Church. But as there is no record of any reply given by Peter, it is probable that he bore the rebuke meekly: humbled, no doubt, in spirit before the great Being whom he had again offended; and not only does it seem likely that he met this public humiliation with silent and Christian forbearance, but in his last epistle he speaks of Paul "as his beloved brother," generously bearing his powerful testimony to the wisdom contained in his epistles, and warning the hearers of Paul against rejecting aught in them which, from want of learning, they may not understand, and "therefore wrest them, as the unlearned and unstable do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction."

The closing scene of this most interesting

apostle's life, we have had no means of contemplating, though the Saviour's last affecting and pathetic address to him, in which he prophesies that he will die a martyr in his cause, makes one particularly desirous to procure details of it.

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?' He saith unto him, 'Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee!' He saith unto him, 'Feed my lambs!' He saith to him again the second time, 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?' He saith unto him, 'Yea, Lord! thou knowest that I love thee!' He saith unto him, 'Feed my sheep!' He saith unto him the third time, 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?' Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? and he said unto him, 'Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee!' Jesus saith unto him, 'Feed my sheep! Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not.' This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God; and when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, 'Follow me!'"

"The case of Peter," says the pious and learned Scott, in his Notes to the Gospel of John, "required a more particular address than that of the other apostles, in order that both he and others

might derive the greater benefit from his fall and his recovery. Our Lord, therefore, asked him by his original name, as if he had forfeited that of PETER by his instability, whether he loved him more than these. The latter clause might be interpreted of his employment and gains as a fisherman, and be considered as a demand whether he loved Jesus above his secular interests; but Peter's answer determines us to another interpretation. He had, before his fall, in effect said that he loved his Lord more than the other disciples did; for he had boasted that though all men should forsake him, yet would not he. Jesus now asked whether he would stand to this, and aver that he loved him more than the others did. To this he answered modestly by saying, "Thou knowest that I love thee," without professing to love him more than others. Our Lord, therefore, renewed his appointment to the ministerial and apostolical office; at the same time commanding him to feed his lambs, or his *little lambs*, even the least of them; for the word is diminutive: this intimated to him that his late experience of his own weakness ought to render him peculiarly condescending, complaisant, tender, and attentive to the meanest and feeblest believers. As Peter had *thrice* denied Christ, so he was pleased to repeat the same question a third time: this grieved Peter, as it reminded him that he had given sufficient cause for being thus repeatedly questioned concerning the sincerity of his love to his Lord. Conscious, however, of his integrity,



he more solemnly appealed to Christ, as knowing all things, even the secrets of his heart, that he knew he loved him with cordial affection, notwithstanding the inconsistency of his late behavior. Our Lord thus tacitly allowed the truth of his profession, and renewed his charge to him to feed his sheep."

"Peter," continues the commentator, "had earnestly professed his readiness to die with Christ, yet had shamefully failed when put to the trial; but our Lord next assured him that he would at length be called on to perform that engagement, and signified the death by which he would, as a martyr for his truth, glorify God." No doubt that this information, however awful, was gratefully received by the devoted, ardent, though, at times, the unstable, follower of his beloved Master; as it proved the Saviour's confidence in him, notwithstanding all his errors.

There was, indeed, an energy of character in Peter, which fitted him to be an apostle and a martyr. He was the questioning, the observing, the conversing disciple. The others were probably withheld by timidity from talking with their Lord, and putting frequent questions to him; but Peter was the willing spokesman on all occasions; and to him we owe that impressive lesson afforded us by the Saviour's reply, when asked by him how often he was to forgive an offending brother, "I say not unto thee until seven times, but unto seventy times seven."

But whether we contemplate Peter as an example or as a warning, in the early part of his reli-

gious career, it is cheering and instructive, indeed, to acquaint ourselves with him in his writings, when he approached the painful and awful close of it; when, having been enabled to fight a good fight, in fulfilment of his blessed Lord's prayer, that "his faith might not fail," and having been "converted himself," and having strengthened his brethren, he addressed his last awfully impressive epistle to his Christian brethren, before he himself was summoned to that awful trial, after which he was to receive the end of "his faith," even "the salvation of his soul!" Who can read, without trembling awe, his eloquent description of the day of judgment; "that day" which, as he says, "will come like a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up;" while he adds this impressive lesson, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" And who can contemplate, without affectionate admiration, the *undoubting*, but *unfearing*, certainty with which he speaks of his approaching death, as foretold by our Lord: "Knowing," said he, "that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me."

Soon after he had thus written, it is probable that he repaired to the expected scene of his suffering, and met his doom—met it, undoubtedly, as became one taught by experience to know his own recurring weakness, admonished often by the

remembrance of that eye which had once beamed in mild reproof upon him; but which, I doubt not, he beheld in the hour of his last trial and dying agonies, fixed upon him with tender encouragement and approving love; while, in his closing ear, seemed once again to sound the welcome promised to the devoted follower of the cross, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

We, of these latter days, can see the founder of our religion only in the record of his word, and hear him only in his ever-enduring precepts; but, though we hear him not externally with our ears, he still speaks in the heart of us all, if we will but listen to his purifying voice; and though the look of his reproachful eye can be beheld by us only with our mental vision, still, that eye is continually over us; and when, like the apostle, we are tempted to feel too great security in our own strength, and to neglect to implore the assistance which cometh from above, let us recall the look which Jesus gave to the offending Peter, and remember that the same eye, although unseen, is watching and regarding us still.

O! could we ever lie, even upon what are called trifling occasions, if we once believed the certain, however disregarded *truth*, that the Lord takes cognizance of every species of falsehood, and that the eye, which looked the apostle into shame and agonizing contrition, beholds our lying lips with the same indignation with which it reproofed him, reminding us that "all liars shall

have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone," and that *without* the city of life is "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

I SHALL not give many individual instances of those whom even the fear of death has not been able to terrify into falsehood, because they were supported in their integrity by the fear of God ; but such facts are on record. The history of the primitive Christians contains many examples, both of men and women, whom neither threats nor bribes could induce for a moment to withhold or falsify the truth, or to conceal their newly-embraced opinions, though certain that torture and death would be the consequence : *fearless* and *determined* beings, who, though their rulers, averse to punish them, would gladly have allowed their change to pass unnoticed, persisted, like the prophet Daniel, openly to display the faith that was in them, exclaiming at every interrogatory, and in the midst of tortures and of death, "We are Christians ! we are Christians !" Some martyrs of more modern days, Catholics, as well as Protestants, have borne the same unshaken testimony to what they believed to be religious truth ; but Lati-

mer, more especially, was so famous amongst the latter, not only for the pureness of his life, but for the *sincerity* and goodness of his *evangelical doctrine*, (which, since the beginning of his preaching, had in all points been conformable to the teaching of Christ and of his apostles,) that the very adversaries of God's truth, with all their menacing words and cruel imprisonment, could not withdraw him from it. But whatsoever he had *once preached*, he *valiantly defended* the same before the world, *without fear of any mortal creature*, although of never so great power and high authority; wishing and minding rather to suffer not only loss of worldly possessions, but of life, than that the glory of God, and the truth of Christ's gospel, should in any point be obscured or defaced through him. Thus this eminent person exhibited a striking contrast to that fear of man, which is the root of all lying, and all *disimulation*; that mean, grovelling, and pernicious fear, which every day is leading us either to *disguise* or withhold our real opinion, if not to be absolutely guilty of uttering falsehood, and which induces us but too often to remain silent, and ineffective, even when the oppressed and the insulted require us to speak in their defence, and when the cause of truth and of righteousness is injured by our silence. The early FRIENDS were exemplary instances of the power of faith to lift the Christian above all fear of man; and not only George Fox himself, but many of his humblest followers, were known to be persons "*who would rather have died than spoken of a lie.*"

There was one female Friend, amongst others, of the name of Mary Dyar, who, after undergoing some persecution for the sake of her religious tenets at Boston, in America, was led to the gallows between two young men condemned, like herself, to suffer for conscience' sake; but having seen them executed, she was reprieved, carried back to prison, and then, being discharged, was permitted to go to another part of the country; but, apprehending it to be her duty to return to "the bloody town of Boston," she was summoned before the General Court. On her appearance there, the Governor, John Endicott, said, "Are you the same Mary Dyar that was here before?" And it seems he *was preparing an evasion for her*; there having been another of that name returned from Old England. But she was so far from disguising the truth, that she answered undauntedly, "*I am the same Mary Dyar that was here the last General Court.*" The consequence was immediate imprisonment; and, soon after, death.

But the following narrative, which, like the preceding one, is recorded in Sewell's History of the people called Quakers, bears so directly on the point in question, that I am tempted to give it to my readers in all its details:

"About the fore part of this year, if I mistake not, there happened a case at Edmond's-Bury, which I cannot well pass by in silence; viz., a certain young woman was committed to prison for child-murder. Whilst she was in jail, it is said, William Bennet, a prisoner for conscience' sake,



came to her, and in discourse asked her whether, during the course of her life, she had not many times transgressed against her conscience? and whether she had not often thereupon felt secret checks and inward reproofs, and been troubled in her mind because of the evil committed; and this he did in such a convincing way, that she not only assented to what he laid before her, but his discourse so reached her heart, that she came clearly to see, that if she had not been so stubborn and disobedient to those inward reproofs, in all probability she would not have come to such a miserable fall as she now had; for man, not desiring the knowledge of God's ways, and departing from him, is left helpless, and cannot keep himself from evil, though it may be such as formerly he would have abhorred in the highest degree, and have said with Hazael, 'What! is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?' William Bennet, thus opening matters to her, did, by his wholesome admonition, so work upon her mind, that she, who never had conversed with the Quakers, and was altogether ignorant of their doctrine, now came to apprehend that it was the grace of God that brings salvation, which she so often had withstood, and that this grace had not yet quite forsaken her, but now made her sensible of the greatness of her transgression. This consideration wrought so powerfully, that, from a most grievous sinner, she became a true penitent; and with hearty sorrow she cried unto the Lord, 'that it might please him not to hide his countenance.' And continuing in this state of humiliation and

sincere repentance, and persevering in supplication, she felt, in time, ease; and, giving heed to the exhortations of the said Bennet, she obtained, at length, to a sure hope of forgiveness by the precious blood of the immaculate Lamb, who died for the sins of the world. Of this she gave manifest proofs at her trial before Judge Matthew Hale, who, having heard how penitent she was, would fain have spared her. She being asked, according to the form, '*Guilty or not guilty?*' readily answered, '*Guilty.*' This astonished the judge, and therefore he told her that she seemed not duly to consider what she said, since it could not well be believed that such a one as she, who, it may be, inconsiderately, had roughly handled her child, should have killed it wilfully and designedly. Here the judge opened a back door for her to avoid the punishment of death. But now the fear of God had got so much room in her heart, that no tampering would do; no fig-leaves could serve her for a cover; for she knew now that this would have been adding sin to sin, and to cover herself with a covering, but not of God's Spirit; and therefore she plainly signified to the court that indeed she had committed the mischievous act intendedly, thereby to hide her shame; and that having sinned thus grievously, and being affected now with true repentance, she could by no means excuse herself, but was willing to undergo the punishment the law required; and, therefore, she could but acknowledge herself guilty, since otherwise how could she expect forgiveness from the Lord? This undisguised and free confession

being spoken with a serious countenance, did so affect the judge, that, tears trickling down his cheeks, he sorrowfully said, 'Woman! such a case as this I never met with before. Perhaps you, who are but young, and speak so piously, as being struck to the heart with repentance, might yet do much good in the world; but now you force me so that, *ex officio*, I must pronounce sentence of death against you, since you will admit of no excuse.' Standing to what she had said, the judge pronounced the sentence of death; and when, afterward, she came to the place of execution, she made a pathological speech to the people, exhorting the spectators, especially those of the young, 'to have the fear of God before their eyes; to give heed to his secret reproofs for evil, and so not to grieve and resist the good Spirit of the Lord, which she herself not having timely minded, it had made her run on in evil, and thus proceeding from wickedness to wickedness, it had brought her to this dismal exit. But, since she firmly trusted to God's infinite mercy, nay, surely believed her sins, though of a bloody dye, to be washed off by the pure blood of Christ, she could contentedly depart this life.' Thus she preached at the gallows the doctrine of the Quakers, and gave heart-melting proofs that her immortal soul was to enter into Paradise, as well as anciently that of the thief on the cross."

The preceding chapter contains three instances of martyrdom, undergone for the sake of religious truth, and attended with that animating publicity which is usual on such occasions, par-

ticularly when the sufferers are persons of a certain rank and eminence in society.

But she who died, as narrated in the story given above, for the cause of *spontaneous* truth, and *willingly* resigned her life, rather than be guilty of a *lie* to save it, though that lie was considered by the law of the country, and by the world at large, to be no lie at all: this bright example of what a true and lively faith can do for us in an hour of strong temptation, was not only an humble, guilty woman, but a *nameless* one also. She was an obscure, friendless individual, whose name on earth seems to be nowhere recorded; and, probably, no strong interest was felt for her disastrous death, except by the preacher who converted her, and by the judge who condemned her. This afflicted person was also well aware that the courage with which she met her fate, and died rather than utter a falsehood, would not be cheered and honored by an anxious populace, or by the tearful farewells of mourning but admiring friends: she also knew that her honest avowal would brand her with the odious guilt of murdering her child, and yet she persevered in her adherence to the truth! Therefore, I humbly trust that, however inferior she may appear in the eyes of her fellow-mortals to martyrs of a loftier and more important description, this willing victim of what she thought her duty, offered as acceptable a sacrifice as theirs, in the eyes of her Judge and her Redeemer.

No doubt, as I before observed, the history of

both public and private life may afford many more examples of equal reverence for truth, derived from religious motives; but as the foregoing instance was more immediately before me, I was induced to give it, as an apt illustration of the precept which I wish to enforce.

The few, and not the many, are called upon to earn the honors of public martyrdom, and to shine like stars in the firmament of distant days; and in like manner, few of us are exposed to the danger of *telling* great and *wicked* falsehoods. But as it is more difficult, perhaps, to bear with fortitude the little *daily* trials of life, than great calamities, because we summon up all our spiritual and moral strength to resist the latter, but often do not feel it to be a necessary duty to bear the former with meekness and resignation; so is it more difficult to overcome and resist temptations to every-day lying and deceit, than to falsehoods of a worse description; since, while these little lies often steal on us unawares, and take us unprepared, we know them to be so trivial, that they escape notice, and to be so *tolerated*, that even if detected, they will not incur *reproof*. Still I must again and again repeat the burden of my song, that *moral result* which, however weakly I may have performed my task, I have labored incessantly through the whole of my work to draw and illustrate; namely, that this little and tolerated lying, as well as great and reprobated falsehood, is wholly inconsistent with the character of a serious Christian, and sinful in the eyes of the God of truth: that in the daily re-



cunning temptation to deceive, our only security is to lift up our soul in secret supplication to be preserved faithful in the hour of danger, and always to remember, without any *qualification* of the monitory words, that "lying lips are abomination to the Lord."

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### CONCLUSION.

I SHALL now give a summary of the didactic part of these observations on lying, and the principles which, with much fearfulness and humility, I have ventured to lay down.

I have stated that if there be no other true definition of lying than an intention to deceive, withholding the truth with such an intention partakes as much of the nature of falsehood as direct lies; and that, therefore, lies are of two natures, active and passive; or, in other words, direct and indirect.

That a PASSIVE LIE is equally as irreconcilable to moral principles as an active one.

That the LIES OF VANITY are of an active and passive nature; and that though we are tempted to be guilty of the former, our temptations to the latter are stronger still.

That many who would shrink with moral disgust from committing the latter species of falsehood, are apt to remain silent when their vanity is gratified, without any overt act of de-



ceit on their part; and are contented to let the flattering representation remain uncontradicted.

That this disengenuous passiveness belongs to that common species of falsehood, *withholding the truth*.

That lying is a common vice, and the habit of it so insensibly acquired, that many persons violate the truth without being conscious that it is a sin to do so, and even look on dexterity in *white lying*, as it is called, as a thing to be proud of; but that it were well to consider whether, if we allow ourselves liberty to lie on trivial occasions, we do not weaken our power to resist temptation to utter falsehoods which may be dangerous in their results to our own well-being, and that of others.

That if we allow ourselves to violate the truth, that is, deceive for any purpose whatever, who can say where this self-indulgence will submit to be bounded?

That those who learn to resist the daily temptation to tell what are deemed trivial and innocent lies, will be better able to withstand allurements to serious and important deviations from truth.

That the LIES OF FLATTERY are, generally speaking, not only unprincipled, but offensive.

That there are few persons with whom it is so difficult to keep up the relations of peace and amity as flatterers by system and habit.

That the view taken by the flatterer of the penetration of the flattered is often erroneous. That the really intelligent are usually aware to how much praise and admiration they are entitled,

be it encomium on their personal or mental qualifications.

That the LIE OF FEAR springs from the want of moral courage; and that, as this defect is by no means confined to any class or age, the result of it, that fear of man which prompts to the lie of fear, must be universal.

That some lies, which are thought to be LIES OF BENEVOLENCE, are not so in reality, but may be resolved into lies of fear, being occasioned by a dread of losing favor by speaking the truth, and not by real kindness of heart.

That the daily lying and deceit tolerated in society, and which are generally declared necessary to preserve good-will, and avoid offence to the self-love of others, are the result of false, not real benevolence, for that those who practice it the most to their acquaintances when present, are only too apt to make detracting observations on them when they are out of sight.

That true benevolence would insure, not destroy, the existence of sincerity, as those who cultivate the benevolent affections always see the good qualities of their acquaintances in the strongest light, and throw their defects into shade; that, consequently, they need not shrink from speaking truth on all occasions. That the kindness which prompts to erroneous conduct cannot long continue to bear even a remote connection with real benevolence: that *unprincipled benevolence* soon degenerates into *malevolence*.

That if those who possess good sense would use it as zealously to remove obstacles in the

way of spontaneous truth, as they do to justify themselves in the practice of falsehood, the difficulty of always speaking the truth would in time vanish.

That the LIE OF CONVENIENCE, namely, the order to servants to say, "not at home," that is, teaching them to lie for our convenience, is, at the same time, teaching them to lie for their own whenever the temptation offers.

That those masters and mistresses who show their domestics that they do not themselves value truth, and thus render the consciences of the latter callous to its requireing, forfeit their right, and lose their chance, of having servants worthy of confidence, degrade their own characters also in their opinions, and incur an awful guilt by endangering their servants' well-being here and hereafter.

That husbands who employ their wives, and wives their husbands, and that parents who employ their children to utter for them the lies of convenience, have no right to be angry or surprised if their wedded or parental confidence be afterward painfully abused, since they have taught their families the habit of deceit, by encouraging them in the practice of what they call *innocent white lying*.

That LIES OF INTEREST are sometimes more excusable and less offensive than others, but are disgusting when told by those whom conscious *independence* preserves from any strong temptation to violate truth.

That LIES OF FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY, namely,

lies intended wilfully to destroy the reputation of men and women, are less frequent than falsehoods of any other description, because the arm of the law defends reputations.

That, notwithstanding, there are many persons, worn both in body and mind by the consciousness of being the object of calumnies and suspicions which they have not the power to combat, who steal broken-hearted into their graves, thankful for the summons of death, and hoping to find refuge from the injustice of their fellow-creatures in the bosom of their Saviour.

That against LIES OF SECOND-RATE MALIGNITY the law holds out no protection. That they spring from the spirit of detraction, and cannot be exceeded in base and petty treachery.

That LIES OF REAL BENEVOLENCE, though the most amiable and respectable of all lies, are, notwithstanding, objectionable, and ought not to be told.

That to deceive the sick and the dying is a dereliction of principle which not even benevolence can excuse; since, who shall venture to assert that a deliberate and wilful falsehood is justifiable?

That withholding the truth with regard to the character of a servant—*alias*, the passive lie of benevolence—is a pernicious and reprehensible custom: that, if benevolent to the hired, it is malevolent to the person hiring, and may be fatal to the person so favored.

That the masters and mistresses who thus perform what they call a benevolent action, at the expense of sincerity, often, no doubt, find their

sin visited on their own heads ; because, if servants know that, owing to the lax morality of their employers, their faults will not receive their proper punishment, that is, disclosure, when they are turned away, one of the most powerful motives to behave well is removed, since those are not likely to abstain from sin who are sure that they shall sin with impunity.

That it would be REAL BENEVOLENCE to tell, and not to withhold, the whole truth on such occasions ; because those who hire servants so erroneously befriended, may, from ignorance of their besetting sins, put temptations in their way to repeat their fault ; and may thereby expose them to incur, some day or other, the severest penalty of the law.

That it is wrong, however benevolently meant, to conceal the whole extent of a calamity from an afflicted person ; not only because it shows a distrust of the wisdom of the Deity, and implies that he is not a fit judge of the proper degree of trial to be inflicted on his creatures, but because it is a *withholding of the truth with an intention to deceive* ; and that such a practice is not only wrong, but *inexpedient* ; as we may thereby stand between the sufferer and the consolation which might have been afforded in some cases by the very nature and intensity of the blow inflicted ; and, lastly, because such concealment is seldom ultimately successful, since the truth comes out usually in the end, and when the sufferer is not so well able to bear it

That LIES OF WANTONNESS are lies which are often told for no other motive than to show the utterer's total contempt for truth; and that there is no hope for the amendment of such persons, since they thus sin from a depraved fondness for speaking and inventing falsehood.

That dress affords good illustrations of PRACTICAL LIES.

That if false hair, false bloom, false eyebrows, and other artificial aids to the appearance, are so well contrived that they seem palpably intended to pass for natural beauties, then do these aids of dress partake of the vicious nature of other lying.

That the medical man who desires his servant to call him out of church, or from a party, when he is not wanted, in order to give him the appearance of the great business which he has *not*; and the author who makes his publisher put second and third edition before a work of which, perhaps, even the *first* is not wholly sold, are also guilty of PRACTICAL LIES.

That the practical lies most fatal to others are those acted by men who, when in the gulf of bankruptcy, launch out into increased splendor of living, in order to obtain further credit by inducing an opinion that they are rich.

That another pernicious *practical* lie is acted by boys and girls at school, who employ their schoolfellows to do exercises for them; or who themselves do them for others: that by this means children become acquainted with the practice of deceit as soon as they enter a public school; and



thus is counteracted the effect of those principles of spontaneous truth which they may have learned at home.

That lying is mischievous and impolitic, because it destroys confidence, that best charm and only cement of society; and that it is almost impossible to believe our acquaintances, or expect to be believed ourselves, when we or they have once been detected in falsehood.

That speaking the truth does not imply a necessity to wound the feelings of any one. That offensive or home truths should never be *volunteered*, though one lays it down as a principle that truth must be spoken *when called for*.

That often the temporary wound given by us, on principle, to the self-love of others, may be attended with lasting benefit to them, and benevolence in reality be not wounded, but gratified; since the truly benevolent can always find a balm for the wounds which duty obliges them to inflict.

That were the utterance of spontaneous truth to become a general principle of action in society, no one would dare to put such questions concerning their defects as I have enumerated; therefore the difficulty of always speaking truth would be almost annihilated.

That those who, in the presence of their acquaintance, make mortifying observations on their personal defects, or wound their self-love in any other way, are not actuated by the love of truth, but that their sincerity is the result of *coarseness of mind*, and of the *mean wish to inflict pain*.

That all human beings are, in their closets, convinced of the importance of truth to the interests of society, though few, comparatively, think the practice binding on them when acting in the busy scene of the world.

That we must wonder still less at the little shame attached to white lying, when we see it sanctioned in the highest assemblies in the kingdom.

That in the heat of political debate, in either house of parliament, offence is given and received, and the unavoidable consequence is thought to be apology or duel: that the necessity of either is obviated only by LYING, the offender being at length induced to declare that by black he did not mean black, but white, and the offended to say, "Enough: I am satisfied."

That the supposed necessity of thus making apologies in the language of falsehood, is much to be deplored; and that the language of truth might be used with equal effect.

That if the offender and offended were married men, the former might declare that he would not, for any worldly consideration, run the risk of making his own wife a widow, and his own children fatherless, nor those of any other man; and that he was also withheld by obedience to the Divine command, "Thou shalt not kill."

That though there might be many heroes present on such an occasion whose heads were bowed down with the weight of their laurels, the man who could thus speak and act against the bloody

custom of the world would be a greater hero, in the best sense of the word, as he would be made superior to the fear of man by the *fear of God*.

That some persons say that they have lied so as to deceive with an air of complacency, as if vain of their deceptive art, adding, "But it was only a white lie, you know;" as if, therefore, it was no lie at all.

That it is common to hear even the pious and the moral assert that a deviation from truth, or a withholding of the truth, is *sometimes* absolutely necessary.

That persons who thus reason, if asked whether, while repeating the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," they may, nevertheless, pilfer in some small degree, would undoubtedly answer in the negative; yet that white lying is as much an infringement of the moral law as pilfering is of the commandment not to steal.

That I have thought it right to give extracts from many powerful writers in corroboration of my own opinion on the subject of lying.

That if asked why I have taken so much trouble to prove what no one ever doubted, I reply that I have done so in order to force on the attention of my readers that not one of these writers mentions any allowed exception to the general rule of truth; and it seems to be their opinion that no *mental reservation* is to be permitted on *special occasions*.

That the principle of truth is an *immutable principle*, or it is of no use as a guard to morals.  
That it is earnestly to be hoped and desired

that the day may come when it shall be as dishonorable to commit the slightest breach of veracity as to pass counterfeit shillings.

That Dr. Hawkesworth is wrong in saying that the liar is universally abandoned and despised; for although we dismiss the servant whose habit of lying offends us, we never refuse to associate with the liar of rank and opulence.

That though, as he says, the imputation of a lie is an insult for which life only can atone, the man who would thus fatally resent it does not even reprove the *lie of convenience* in his wife or child, and is often guilty of it himself.

That the lying order given to a servant entails consequences of a mischievous nature: that it lowers the standard of truth in the person who receives it, lowers the persons who give it, and deprives the latter of their best claim to their servants' respect; namely, a conviction of their MORAL SUPERIORITY.

That the account given by Boswell of Johnson's regard to truth furnishes us with a better argument for it than is afforded by the best moral fictions.

That if Johnson could always speak the truth, others can do the same; as it does not require his force of intellect to enable us to be sincere.

That if it be asked what would be gained by always speaking the truth, I answer, that the individuals so speaking would acquire the involuntary confidence and reverence of their fellow-creatures.

That the consciousness of truth and ingenuous-

ness gives a radiance to the countenance, and a charm to the manner, which no other quality of mind can equally bestow.

That the contrast to this picture must be familiar to the memory of every one.

That it is a delightful sensation to feel and inspire confidence.

That it is delightful to know that we have friends on whom we can always rely for honest counsel and ingenuous reproof.

That it is an ambition worthy of thinking beings to endeavor to qualify ourselves, and those whom we love, to be such friends as these.

That if each individual family would resolve to avoid every species of falsehood, whether authorized by custom or not, the example would soon spread.

That nothing is impossible to zeal and enterprise.

That there is a river which, if suffered to flow over the impurities of falsehood and dissimulation in the world, is powerful enough to wash them all away; since it flows from the FOUNTAIN OF EVER-LIVING WATERS.

That the powerful writers from whom I have given extracts have treated the subject of truth as *moralists only*; and have, therefore, kept out of sight the only *sure* motive to resist the temptation to lie; namely, OBEDIENCE TO THE DIVINE WILL.

That the moral man *may* utter spontaneous truth on all occasions; but the religious man, if he acts consistently, *must* do so.

That both the Old and New Testament abound in facts and texts to prove how odious the sin of lying is in the sight of the Almighty; as I have shown in several quotations from Scripture to that effect.

That as no person has a right to resent being called a sloven who goes about in a stained garment, though that stain be a single one; so that person who indulges in any one species of lie cannot declare, with justice, that he deserves not the name of liar.

That the all-powerful Being who has said, "as is our day, our strength shall be," still lives to hear the prayer of all who call on Him, and in the hour of temptation will "strengthen them out of Zion."

That in all other times of danger the believer supplicates for help, but few persons think of praying to be preserved from *little lying*, though the Lord has not revealed to us what species of lying he *tolerates*, and what he *reproves*.

That though I am sure it is not impossible to speak the truth always, when persons are powerfully influenced by religious motives, I admit the extreme difficulty of it, and have given the conduct of some distinguished religious characters as illustrations of the difficulty.

That other instances have been stated, in order to exemplify the power of religious motives on some minds to induce undaunted utterance of the truth, even when death was the sure consequence.

That temptations to little lying are far more common than temptations to *great and important*



lies : that they are far more difficult to resist, because they come upon us daily and unawares, and because we know that we may utter white lies without fear of detection ; and, if detected, without any risk of being disgraced by them in the eyes of others.

That, notwithstanding, they are, equally with great lies, contrary to the will of God, and that it is necessary to be “ watchful unto prayer,” when we are tempted to commit them.

I conclude this summary by again conjuring my readers to reflect that there is no moral difficulty, however great, which COURAGE, ZEAL, and PERSEVERANCE will not enable them to overcome ; and never, probably, was there a period in the history of man, when those qualities seemed more successfully called into action than at the present moment.

Never was there a better opportunity of establishing general society on the principles of truth, than that now afforded by the enlightened plan of educating the INFANT POPULATION of these United Kingdoms.

There is one common ground on which the most skeptical philosopher and the most serious Christian meet, and cordially agree ; namely, on the doctrine of the *omnipotence of motives*. They differ only on the *nature* of the motives to be applied to human actions : the one approving of moral motives alone, the other advocating the propriety of giving religious ones.

But those motives only can be made to act upon the *infant* mind which it is able to understand ; and they are, chiefly, the hope of reward

for obedience, and the dread of punishment for disobedience. But these motives are all-sufficient; therefore, even at the earliest period of life, a love of truth, and an abhorrence of lying, may be inculcated with the greatest success. Moreover, HABIT, that best of friends or worst of foes, according to the direction given to its power, may form an impregnable barrier to defend the pupils thus trained against the allurements of falsehood.

Children taught to tell the truth from the motive of fear and of hope, and from the force of habit, will be so well prepared to admit and profit by the highest motives to do so, as soon as they can be unfolded to their minds, that, when they are removed to other schools, as they advance in life, they will be found to abhor every description of lying and deceit; and thus the cause of *spontaneous truth* and general education will go forward, progressing and prospering together.

Nor can the mere moralist, nor the man of the world, be blind to the benefits which would accrue to them, were society to be built on the foundation of truth and of sincerity. If our servants, a race of persons on whom much of our daily comfort depends, are trained up in habits of truth, domestic confidence and security will be the happy result; and we shall no longer hear the common complaint of their lies and dishonesty; and the parents who feel the value of truth in their domestics, will doubtless take care to teach their children those habits which have had power to raise even their inferiors in the scale of utility

and of moral excellence. Where are the worldlings who, in such a state of society, would venture to persevere in what they now deem *necessary white lying*, when the lady may be shamed into truth by the refusal of her *waiting-maid* to utter the lie required; and the gentleman may learn to feel the meanness of falsehood, alias, of the LIE OF CONVENIENCE, by the respectful but firm resistance to utter it of his *valet-de-chambre*? But if the minds of the poor and the laborious, who must always form the most extensive part of the community, are formed in infancy to the practice of moral virtue, the happiness, safety, and improvement of the higher classes will, I doubt not, be thereby secured. As the lofty heads of the pyramids of Egypt were rendered able to resist the power of the storm and the whirlwind, through successive ages, by the extent of their bases, and by the soundness and strength of the materials of which they were constructed, so, the continued security, and the very existence, perhaps, of the higher orders in society, may depend on the extended moral teaching and sound principles of the lowest orders; for treachery and conspiracy, with their results, rebellion and assassination, are not likely to be the crimes of those who have been taught to practice *truth* and *openness* in all their dealings, on the ground of MORAL ORDER, and obedience to the WILL OF GOD.

But it is the bounden duty of the rich and of the great to maintain their superiority of mind and morals, as well as that of wealth and situation. I beseech them to remember that it will

always be their place to give and not to *take* example; and they must be careful, in a race of morality, to be neither outstripped nor overtaken by their inferiors. They must also believe, in order to render their efforts successful, that although morality without religion is comparatively weak, yet when these are combined they are strong enough to overcome all obstacles.

Lying is a sin which tempts us on every side, but is more to be dreaded when it allures us in the shape of white lies; for against these, as I have before observed, we are not on our guard; and, instead of looking on them as enemies, we consider them as friends.

BLACK LIES, if I may so call them, are beasts and birds of prey, which we rarely see, and which, when seen, we know that we must instantly avoid; but white lies approach us in the pleasing shape of *necessary courtesies and innocent self-defence*.

Finally, I would urge them to remember that, if they believe in the records of holy writ, they can thence derive sufficient motives to enable them to tell spontaneous truth, in defiance of the sneers of the world, and of "evil and good report."

That faith in a life to come, connected with a close dependence on Divine grace, will give them power in this, as well as in other respects, to emancipate themselves from their own bondage of corruption, as well as to promote the purification of others. For Christians possess what Archimedes wanted—they have *another* sphere on which to fix their hold; and by that means can be enabled to move, to influence, and to benefit this present

world of transitory enjoyments: a world which is in reality safe and precious to those alone who "use it without abusing it," and who are ever looking beyond it to "a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

THE END.

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